

UNITING FOR LARGER SERVICE

JOHN W. HOYT, JR.

280 H86.

Hoyt \$2.00
Uniting for SEP 35
larger service
Acc. No. 851~

280 H86

Keep Your Card in This Pocket

Books will be issued only on presentation of proper library cards.

Unless labeled otherwise, books may be retained for four weeks. Borrowers finding books marked, defaced or mutilated are expected to report same at library desk; otherwise the last borrower will be held responsible for all imperfections discovered.

The card holder is responsible for all books drawn on this card.

Penalty for over-due books 2c a day plus cost of notices.

Lost cards and change of residence must be reported promptly.



Public Library
Kansas City, Mo.

Keep Your Card in This Pocket

KANSAS CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY
CITY

DATE DUE

27 DEC 38

25 JAN 53

9 MAR 63

27 APR 70

6 JUN 40

28 AUG 60

31 DEC 79

3 MARCH 18

3 NOV 38 92

9 JUN 38 11

16 MAY 38

6

DEC 5 '44 00

NOV 14 '47

UNITING FOR LARGER SERVICE

UNITING *for* LARGER SERVICE

*A book telling what can be accomplished by
Federated Churches, and how to
organize them*

BY

REV. JOHN W. HOYT, JR.,
B.S., M.A., B.D.

*Associate Pastor of the El Dorado County Federated
Church, Placerville, Calif., 1928-1934; Co-Pastor,
June-September, 1934; Pastor of Fair
Oaks Federated Church*

FOREWORD BY

PROF. JOHN ELLIOTT WISHART,
D.D., LL.D.

*San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Anselmo,
California*

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

NEW YORK :: LONDON

1935

COPYRIGHT, 1935, BY JOHN W. HOYT, JR.

All rights reserved. This book, or parts thereof, must
not be reproduced in any form without permission.

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

To
MY WIFE
ANNA J. HOYT

A FAITHFUL AND UNTIRING HELPER IN
THE WORK OF A FEDERATED CHURCH

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	ix
FOREWORD	xiii
 CHAPTER	
I. THE CRIME OF OVERCHURCHED COMMUNITIES	17
II. SURVEYING THE FIELD	27
III. STEPS IN ORGANIZATION	39
IV. ARTICLES OF FEDERATION	50
V. GOVERNING BOARDS	65
VI. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP	75
VII. SELECTION OF PASTORS	88
VIII. RELATIONS BETWEEN PASTORS	99
IX. BUILDINGS AND PROPERTY	113
X. A FIFTY-FIFTY BASIS	126
XI. THE FEDERATED CHURCH AND ITS DENOMINATIONS	137
XII. DOCTRINE, WORSHIP, AND THE SAC- RAMENTS	147
XIII. DOES FEDERATION STAND THE TEST	167
BIBLIOGRAPHY	176

PREFACE

THIS is a period of time in which the Churches of Christ face strong competition. An increasing number of attractions are claiming the attention of people who a few years ago would have been challenged to activity in the religious field. With these competitive attractions come increased temptations through which people are led away from the cultivation of their spiritual natures.

In the face of this problem, the Christian forces are coming to realize that they must put forward as powerful an appeal and as effective a work as possible. In many communities, Christian work is weakened by competition of churches. There are places where there are more churches than the community can support. A large number of such communities have either solved or relieved such conditions by the formation of Federated Churches. Other communities should take advantage of this or some other means of united church work.

It is in the hope that the movement for federation may spread that this book is written. The material included in it is intended to suggest possible modes of procedure to any who may seek to organize Federated Churches. All information given is based on the experience of one or more churches of this type, so as to remove the book from the realm of hypothesis and theory, to the level of practical conclusions resulting from experimentation in various methods.

Preface

Not the least of the obstacles standing in the way of the organization of Federated Churches at the present time, and also in the way of church union on a larger scale, is the prevalent opinion that the union of different denominations is impractical. The fear is constant that the denominations will not play fair with each other in such plans of work. There is a consequent weakness of faith in the possibilities of church union in general. If this book serves to strengthen that faith and to help federated churches of the future to avoid some of the mistakes of the past as well as profit by the successful methods of their predecessors, it will accomplish its purpose.

The Author wishes to express his gratitude and acknowledge his indebtedness to Rev. John E. Wishart, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Theology in San Francisco Theological Seminary, and chairman of the Committee on Church Union of the Presbyterian Synod of California for his gracious words of introduction; to his wife, Anna J. Hoyt, for her suggestions and painstaking care in reading and correcting the manuscript; to his mother Mary E. L. Hoyt, for helpful suggestions; to his father, Rev. John W. Hoyt, for material gathered out of his acquaintance with a large number of churches and communities as Sunday School Missionary in the States of Oregon, Washington, California and Oklahoma; to Miss Leila Luther for her efficient work in copying the manuscript; to Rev. A. G. McVay, and Rev. J. L. Harvey for contributing information concerning the federated churches of which they are pastors and to Prof. W. H. Bleakney, Ph.D., Whitman College, Walla Walla, Wash.

Preface

Most important of all is my gratitude to Rev. C. W. Null. Without his sound leadership in organizing the El Dorado County Federated Church, Placerville, Cal., and without our happy experience together, as pastors of that church, this book could not have been written.

JOHN W. HOYT, JR.

March, 1935
Fair Oaks, California

FOREWORD

THE unsolved problem of modern Christendom is this, how shall the Church, by schisms rent asunder, be brought to feel and to exhibit that unity for which the Master prayed and which, He thought, would convince the world? We of the present generation may plead that these sectarian divisions were not caused by us; we inherited them. But we cannot lightly absolve ourselves from blame for their continuance, if we are satisfied with the situation as it is and desire only to let well-enough alone. We must seriously lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions. Even if our denominationalism has sometimes been overruled for good, our denominationalism is not good.

It must be admitted that the reunion of the whole Church Catholic or even of Protestantism seems far away. To form an undenominational church, would be to add one more denomination to the vast number that already exist. Some noteworthy mergers have been achieved and others are in prospect, but too often "continuing" bodies remain separate, and the sects are multiplied. One may console oneself with the thought that divisive freedom is better than enforced uniformity, but one dare not deny that the ideal of the New Testament is a unity of love and fellowship to which our sectarianism is an intolerable barrier.

Meanwhile there are various ways in which we may

Foreword

move toward the distant goal of the oneness of believers, and one hopeful development of recent times is the organization of Federated Churches. The author of this book is a young minister of the Presbyterian Church who has for a number of years served as pastor of a Federated Church, and has achieved a success which gives weight to his words. The reader will find it easy to believe that the tact and sympathy which Mr. Hoyt constantly recommends, have been characteristic of his own ministry. He is an enthusiast for the type of work in which he is engaged, but an enthusiasm which has stood the test of years, must have a solid foundation.

The author evidently does not regard the Federated Church as the final solution of the problem of Denominationalism. But it has a value as a practical experiment in Christian fellowship, showing that the New Testament ideal will work if it is tried. It has a value in so far as it removes the scandal of over-churching and rivalry in local communities and sends the message of the gospel to neglected regions. And it has a value as an example and proof of the fact that loyalty to Christ and work for His Kingdom can break down denominational lines in some places, and may ultimately do so everywhere.

JOHN ELLIOTT WISHART,

*San Francisco Theological Seminary,
San Anselmo, California.*

UNITING FOR LARGER SERVICE

I

THE CRIME OF OVERCHURCHED COMMUNITIES

THERE is a time worn adage maintained by many in the field of economics, "Competition is the life of trade." However correct this may or may not be it is surely true that competition of churches is usually the bane of religion. A group of competing churches in a community too small to support all of them will not only kill the effectiveness of any religious program attempted by them but will render an adequate Christian ministry in the community impossible. It results in the starvation of pastors both mentally and physically through pittance wages. It would be nothing short of a miracle if the competing churches were able to provide adequate facilities for an up to date religious education program. Neither of these conditions is desirable. Instead of more and poorer churches, the need of the present age is stronger and better ones, which will be a help rather than a burden to their communities.

The instances of overchurching, remnants of the days gone by when the glory of church leaders was the establishment of a new church anywhere, are too numerous to be covered thoroughly. Let us describe for example two such instances which will point out the evils of such conditions.

Uniting for Larger Service

A certain community with a population of 500 has two churches. One is Methodist Episcopal, the other is Presbyterian. Both have struggled from their very beginning. In most prosperous times, one of them was able to raise the grand total of \$1,000 per year toward the salary of their minister and other operating expenses. The other church boasted an annual budget not exceeding \$600. Without aid from Home Missions Boards neither could pay a pastor adequately. The type of worship and religious education carried on by each has been almost identical throughout the years of their existence. The average congregation in each church on Sunday morning is about 30. The Sunday School in each has an enrollment of about 60. Neither young people's society would exceed a membership of 30. Together they could scarcely give adequate support to one pastor and it is obvious that a more efficient religious work could be carried on were the two united under some fair and impartial arrangement. Yet through false pride and jealousy one or the other, which has been pampered by past leaders and by years of separation, every attempt to bring these two struggling groups together has failed. It is to the credit of the Home Missions Boards that they have withdrawn all support from this field in an effort to bring the people together by economic pressure.

Another example of overchurched which is outstanding and interesting is a community with a population of 2,500 situated in a fertile agricultural section of California. Surrounding the town and contributing to its business and church life are perhaps 2,000 people living on farms of various kinds. This little city is possessed of

Crime of Overchurched Communities

the following churches: Presbyterian, Methodist Episcopal (North), Methodist Episcopal (South), Baptist, Christian (Disciples), German Lutheran, German Congregational, Episcopal, Latter Day Saints, Japanese Baptist, Korean Presbyterian, Church of God, Church of Christ, Church of the Nazarene, Four Square Gospel, Seventh Day Adventist, Christian Science, and Pentecostal, eighteen in all. Of these, five are fairly strong churches each having a membership of 200 to 400. The Japanese and Korean churches each have a membership of about 50. They minister to their own nationalities and reach their own people better than they could be reached by one of the white churches. They are projects of Home Missions Boards and do not add greatly to the problem of overchurching except insofar as these people make up a part of the population from which all the churches must draw their support. The other eleven churches are struggling for life and maintenance and even the stronger churches are somewhat handicapped by competition with one another. It seems obvious to the author that eighteen churches are too many for 4,500 people to support. However, since some readers may not be convinced of this it may be well to state the experience of one of the churches here mentioned.

It has an efficient and popular pastor. He has ministered to the church for some time and there is no desire on the part of the people for a change of ministers. Congregations are good considering the competitive situation. Finances, however, are not so good. A few months ago the pastor was informed in a courteous and sympathetic way that due to insufficient contributions the church could

Uniting for Larger Service

no longer pay his salary. There was no opening elsewhere for him at the time. His meagre salary during the days of prosperity had not permitted him to save to any great extent. Therefore he asked permission to stay with the provision that the people should give him what they could. They bring him such food products as their farms produce and in addition they are able to raise a very small sum of money each month which is barely enough to clothe the family, with no allowance for books and other equipment needed by a wide awake minister. It is an heroic example of the devotion of a pastor and church to each other, yet one wonders if this sacrifice and meagre pastoral support would have been necessary had there been fewer and larger churches in the community.

These two overchurched communities could be duplicated in practically every state in the Union. They are outstanding examples of an overlapping of community effort. Why should intelligent people be so persistent in the continuance of such overlapping? If one church plant is sufficient to care for two congregations with an adequate program of worship and religious education, why build two? Why heat two? Why keep two in repair? Why pay two ministers starvation salaries to take care of two independent groups when one could care for the membership of both and do it on an adequate living wage? It is time that the church learned a few lessons from the business world in the matter of cutting down overhead expense through the organization of larger units. Economy is as important in religious work as in business, both from the standpoint of the effort and work put forth and of the money which must be invested.

Crime of Overchurched Communities

Another evil of overchurching is the waste of missionary funds caused thereby. Where two separate churches in a given community each require home missions aid, it is frequently true that if the community were united in support of a single religious program the one church would be self-supporting. Missionary funds are not given to keep churches alive where the people can support one church of their own. They are meant for the communities which could have no church at all were it not for outside assistance.

That the church leaders are realizing the truth of the principles just mentioned is evidenced by the following quotation which is one of the recommendations of the Findings Committee of the Northern California Church Survey Conference held in Sacramento, California, February 16 and 17, 1933, under the auspices of the National Home Missions Council.

"The insistent needs of many fields, and the shortage of missionary funds of all our denominations, make it imperative that we should not duplicate effort and expense. In harmony with the action of our various Boards, we recommend that Missionary money be not spent in competitive fields. We request the Continuation Committee and the Superintendent's Council to study in a careful and unprejudiced manner all fields where missionary money is being spent competitively and to take such action as the conditions warrant."

This statement points to the fact that the opinions of our major evangelical denominations are crystallizing in favor of cooperation in religious activity and economy in the administration of Missionary funds. Thirteen de-

Uniting for Larger Service

nominations were represented in the conference which adopted the report of which the words above quoted are a part.

A third evil which was apparent in the two over-churched communities mentioned in this chapter is that of inadequate church equipment. Competing churches are almost invariably lacking in facilities for efficient religious instruction. In overchurched situations church plants of one to three rooms are common. Seldom is it found that such churches can provide a separate room for each Sunday School Class, and usually they have trouble finding a sufficient number of capable teachers to operate a school graded upon educational lines. The natural result is a very unfavorable comparison with the effective instruction of our public schools and a consequent loss of respect for religious instruction. In these days when the church must compete against many adverse forces and attractions she should avail herself of the best program and equipment possible.

The most serious offense committed by insistence upon maintaining an overchurched situation is the creation of a wrong impression of religion. The world at large must wonder sometimes whether the churches are primarily interested in proclaiming Christ and the Gospel or in advancing the interests of their particular denominations. Is it a strange phenomenon that people, seeing the foolish overlapping of churches such as those described, should accuse the divergent Protestant faiths of fighting one another? Fighting and bickering cannot be reconciled with the spirit of Jesus, particularly in matters of religious activity. The Churches must learn to demonstrate a spirit

Crime of Overchurched Communities

of brotherly love by actual examples of cooperation and union. If the churches cannot demonstrate in their own relationships that love which they preach, their preaching is a vacuous lip service. Though the church speaks "with the tongues of men and of angels, if it has not love, it is as sounding brass and a clanging cymbal."

Happily, America has passed from an era of the indiscriminate establishment of churches wherever possible, to an era of comity. Although some denominations have refused to cooperate, the leading Protestant communions have entered into a relationship in which comity committees representing a large group of cooperating denominations have been regularly appointed and organized. These committees in various parts of the country decide and recommend concerning the establishment of new churches. If they decide that a church may be established in a given community and a dispute arises as to which denomination shall enter, the comity committee may decide which communion has the prior right to the field.

How these comity committees operate is shown by a little incident which happened recently in one of their meetings. There were gathered together representatives of the Methodists, the Baptists, the Presbyterians, the Disciples, the Episcopalian, the Lutherans and a number of other cooperating denominations.

"Our Board of Church Erection has plans before it for the erection of a new church on Harrison Avenue," was the information given by a Methodist District Superintendent, followed by the query, "Are there any objections to our proceeding with this project?"

"There is already a Presbyterian Church on Greely

Uniting for Larger Service

Square, three blocks north," was the comment of a Presbyterian representative.

"And there is a Lutheran Church on the same street, four blocks east," came from another member of the committee.

"Before we make any decision," suggested the chairman, "would it not be wise to ask our department on religious survey to study the situation in the interest of the whole cause of Christian development in the city? After they report their recommendations to us we can take more intelligent action."

"We will gladly agree to this proposal," said the Methodist representative, "and will make no further plans until this committee acts upon the survey report."

A few weeks later the committee met again and the department on survey presented its report which was in substance as follows: "Judging by the population and number of churches already in the vicinity of Harrison Avenue, no others should be established in that section of the city at present. However, in the Roosevelt Park subdivision where a new residence section is rapidly growing, there should be a new church to care for the increasing number of families."

"I shall recommend that the Methodists establish their new church in Roosevelt Park instead of on Harrison Avenue," commented the District Superintendent.

With this the entire committee heartily agreed and as the group broke up a prominent member was overheard saying, "I am encouraged by the new spirit which has come upon our churches. Thirty years ago the church leaders considered it nobody's business but their own if

Crime of Overchurched Communities

they saw fit to organize a new church. Now, thanks to the advance of Christian thinking, we realize that we all belong to the one great fellowship which is in Christ our common Master."

Thus we have before us the means being used toward the prevention of overchurched situations in the present and future. It is well that our churches are giving prayerful support to such prevention, for prevention of an overchurched condition is far easier than its cure. However, we cannot overlook the cure for the past has already brought forth a tremendous problem of competing churches. Communities which are supersaturated with churches are longing for relief and many of them have not yet found the way out of their troubles.

A number of different plans have been used either as solutions of the problem or as steps toward it. There are instances of competition where one of two churches in a community has withdrawn through exchanges or agreements with the denomination retaining the field. Such action leaves a single Community Church affiliated with a definite denomination. Sometimes where several small communities are grouped together, a Larger Parish plan has been found to operate successfully in which all of the grouped communities combine their efforts in support of a single pastor. By this plan, communities too small to have a church of their own may have the benefit of effective religious work.

Another type of union is the independent Community Church, sometimes called a Union Church. It is in no way connected with any denomination or other organized religious body outside itself. It is strictly a community

Uniting for Larger Service

project and the local church organization holds the final control.

The last solution which I shall suggest here is the type of church with which this book deals,—the Federated Church. This differs from the independent Community or Union Church, in that it is a union of two or more denominational churches which retains a connection with the government of the denominations involved. Frequently such a union can be agreed upon when no other type is possible. There are Federated Churches working with single communities as their field of labor. There are others working on the larger parish plan covering several communities under the leadership of two or more pastors or staff workers. The Federated Church is capable of much flexibility in organization and management and may be arranged to fit practically any overchurched community.

Each of the methods here suggested has been successfully tried. Each has its advantages and disadvantages. The choice of the particular type to be used, however, must be made in accordance with the need of the individual community, in its attempt to eliminate from its life the crime of overchurching.

II

SURVEYING THE FIELD

IN every overchurched city or town there are found some who realize the need for union or some co-operative step between the churches. It will be advisable to enlist their interest and support in bringing about the desired change. Whoever takes leadership in forming the united Community Church should seek the help of these people in surveying the field to determine the possibility of union and the type thereof which may seem advisable.

The following questions should be answered by the survey before any organizational work is attempted. What is the need for union of churches in this community? What is the possibility of such union? If there is a need and possibility of union, what kind of a united work will best serve the religious needs of the field? Should the new church be one serving a single community or is the field such that a larger parish covering several communities might prove successful? The latter will be advisable only where a number of communities are grouped together within a limited area. Also, the communities must be willing to cooperate and must be easily accessible from some central point.

If the community in question is an isolated or single community where there are no possible preaching points

Uniting for Larger Service

nearby which can be advantageously served there are at least three types of union which may be attempted. These are (1) a denominational Community Church, (2) an undenominational or independent Community Church, sometimes called a Union Church, and (3) a Federated Church.

The denominational Community Church is usually the most satisfactory of these three types, provided the people of the community are satisfied with such an arrangement. It may be brought about by the withdrawal of one or more of the competing churches from the community, either voluntarily or through an exchange agreement. The latter is most likely to be accomplished, because it is seldom that a denomination will withdraw from a field unless there is some compensation for it.

To bring about the withdrawal of one denomination some such exchange as this may be used. The Methodists and Presbyterians have established work in Brownsville and also in Jonesville. The Methodists are stronger in Brownsville and the Presbyterians in Jonesville. Both communities feel the need of a united religious work. A convenient exchange in such a case would be for the Presbyterians to withdraw from Brownsville and the Methodists from Jonesville, leaving the church properties and all rights to the parish to the churches which remain. If there should be a difference in the respective property values involved in the exchange or if the Church Erection or Missionary Boards should hold equities in the properties through loans or mortgages thereon, suitable financial adjustments may be made so as to equalize the exchange.

A rather unique instance of the creation of a denominational community church occurred in Live Oak, California,

Surveying the Field

in 1931. The United Brethren and Methodist Episcopal churches of that community had been doing a similar work for a number of years and although there was a friendly feeling between them each had to struggle for financial support because of the existence of the other. It happened that the United Brethren Church was accidentally burned after which event the United Brethren people worshiped with the Methodist Congregation who hospitably invited them to share their church plant. This plan of joint worship led to other thoughts of union but neither group could be brought to unite with the other. As a compromise, an agreement was finally made that, if possible, both the Methodist and United Brethren denominations should withdraw from the community and the two congregations should form a new church of the Presbyterian faith. The sanction of the denominations involved was secured after due process and deliberation. The Methodist property at Live Oak was deeded to the Presbyterian Church in return for which the Presbyterian properties at Ione and Los Molinos were deeded to the Methodists. The Methodists agreed to withdraw from Live Oak and the Presbyterians from Ione and Los Molinos. Similar adjustments were made with the United Brethren concerning their rights in the field and property. The union was consummated, the new church was organized on Presbyterian lines and it has made an excellent record under the new arrangement which seems to meet with general satisfaction.

This denominational type of Community Church presents a number of advantages. Such a church has the full backing of an established faith and a denominational gov-

Uniting for Larger Service

ernment. In case of disciplinary troubles with ministers or members there are higher judicatories to which appeal may be had, for the protection of all concerned. Denominational affiliation makes it possible for the church to apply for Home Missions aid if trouble is experienced in financing the work. Conversely, it gives the church a definite outlet for its benevolence funds. This is important because no church can be thoroughly healthy or successful unless its giving and interest extends beyond the bounds of its own parish. The problem of securing pastors in such a church is made easier of solution, because most reputable ministers hold membership in some recognized denomination. They are much more likely to accept a call to a church under the jurisdiction of a denomination than to one which is independent. Also, the orderly process provided by the denominations for the calling of pastors and for the regulation of their conduct is a distinct advantage.

Among the disadvantages, it may be stated that this type of church carries a denominational label. Most communities where a united church is desirable are made up of people of varying faiths. Some of them will be reticent about joining a church other than their own. This feeling may be overcome in part, at least, by having an Affiliated membership which people may join without embracing the particular denomination which controls the church. In cases where the Community Church is formed by the withdrawal of one denomination it may be found that members of the withdrawing church cannot be reconciled to uniting with the surviving church whereas they might join a Federated or Union Church. There may be

Surveying the Field

other disadvantages, but in this type of work they are far outweighed by the advantages. This is especially true when as in Davis, California, there is but one strong Protestant church for the entire community. This church under denominational leadership has had a steady growth and done an efficient work.

Where it is impossible to agree upon a definite denominational affiliation for a Community Church, it may be possible to form an undenominational or Union Church, independent of any established faith. This becomes a congregational type of church, the final authority being in the local church itself.

This type of church has its advantages. It does not bear a denominational label. People of any faith may feel at home and may feel free to join because it is the church of the community. No distinctions in membership such as regular members and affiliated members are necessary. This makes for unity. Overhead expense is nil. There is no per capita tax for the support of Presbyteries, Synods and General Assemblies. There is no assessment for the support of the District Superintendent, Bishop or other denominational purpose. Let it be said, in this connection, however, that the backing and government of a denomination is sometimes worth far more than it costs.

The chief disadvantage is in the securing of pastors. As has already been stated, many of the best ministers are slow to accept a call from a church with no denominational connection. There is no higher backing in case of trouble within the church. It is impossible to secure financial assistance from Home Missions Boards should that be required. The church has no definite outlet for benevolent

Uniting for Larger Service

giving. To be perfectly neutral in its benevolence it must depend upon independent agencies which may or may not be sound in their activities and administration. The denominational boards, having the competent oversight of their denominations, are thoroughly dependable, but it is difficult for an independent church to apply missionary funds to a denominational board without implications of favoritism. Such a church is virtually a denomination of its own.

Two successful examples of churches of the independent, community type are to be found in the Union Churches of Dixon and Williams, California. A number of others are distributed throughout the country.

Next let us consider the Federated Church. It is a union of two or more denominational churches, each retaining its identity to a certain extent, each retaining its denominational connection, but uniting by agreement in a single cooperative religious program for the community. This kind of an arrangement is brought about by the agreement, first of the local bodies, and then of the denominational authorities. It is practical either in a single community or a larger parish, but we are thinking still in terms of the single community. The Federated Churches of Elk Grove, Fair Oaks, and Orland, California, offer successful examples of this variety of community church.

A number of considerations favor the federated type of union. It does not require people of either church to give up their denominational faith. People who unite are enrolled as Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists or whatever other denominational group may be involved. The church

Surveying the Field

has the backing and higher discipline of both or all of its denominations. Denominational connection aids in the securing of competent and dependable pastors. Financial assistance is available from the Missionary Boards should that be necessary. The denominational Boards furnish a natural outlet for missionary giving and activity. It is not necessary to enter into exchange agreements with other communities as when one or more churches withdraw from the field. The congregations wishing to unite simply pool their properties for the common work of the united group with the agreement that if a separation should occur, the properties would be returned to the original owners in proportion as they were given to the united work. This action frequently provides adequate equipment for the entire group.

The Federated Church has the disadvantage of carrying denominational labels even though it may be known generally as the Federated Church. It soon becomes known that people are being enrolled denominationally, that the controlling board is elected by the denominational groups and consists of denominational representatives, etc., so that as in the case of the Community Church aligned with a single denomination some people may be deterred from uniting if they belong to faiths other than those included organically in the union. This handicap may be overcome as in the former cases by having an affiliated membership for those not wishing to belong to the denominations which have federated. The presentation of benevolence and denominational objects can cause trouble in such churches unless it is very fairly and tactfully done. There is always a danger of mistake or misunderstanding and

Uniting for Larger Service

yet if the church is to be connected with its denominational government, it cannot altogether neglect its denominational responsibility. The divisions in the membership groups, denominational and affiliated, may cause factions within the church which may result in a lack of unity. The identity of the denominational groups leaves a larger possibility of a subsequent separation and a return to the former overchurched situation. Later chapters will further deal with these dangers or objections and suggest practical means of avoiding trouble which may arise from them.

In the case of an independent community where there is no responsibility for outside preaching points, one of these three types of church will be found satisfactory. Where there is a group of communities, however, some form of larger parish organization will be found advantageous because of the added support which will come from the outlying communities. A larger parish may be organized either on a denominational basis, an independent basis or a federated basis. A larger parish may require two or more pastors. Sometimes a religious education director who is not paid as much as a pastor can be substituted for one minister. The staff and its size and qualifications depend upon the requirements of the field. If the field requires but one pastor it is frequently found that the combined strength of the communities participating will be sufficient to support the project without missionary help. If a larger force of workers must be used, missionary aid may be required in the financing of the project. The Boards are usually glad to support such cooperative enterprises which reach a large area. In the

Surveying the Field

larger parish of the El Dorado County Federated Church, centered at Placerville, California, the home missions boards of its two denominations share in the financial assistance making the burden on each less than if a single board had the responsibility.

Since it is the purpose of this book to deal with the organization and problems of Federated Churches, let us assume that after a consideration of the various plans of union, and after a preliminary sounding of the opinions of the people, it is decided that federation is the most feasible plan of union for the community. The next step is to estimate the probable strength of such a union and to enlist the cooperation of all who may be involved in the new enterprise.

An estimate of the probable membership of the Federated Church may be secured by totaling the memberships of the churches contemplating union. It is important also to have a list of the friends of each Church who, although they are not members are supporters. The probable financial strength in the beginning may usually be gauged by totaling the annual contributions of the two bodies, allowing for a slight shrinkage due to the possible dropping out of some who do not favor federation. How large a salary the church can pay its ministers on the new basis, what the other operating expenses will be, how much missionary aid, if any, will be required,—these and similar questions must be answered as fully as possible in order to determine the possibility of the union.

In a move of this kind it is frequently found that there are residents of the community who did not support the churches under a competitive scheme, but whose interest

Uniting for Larger Service

is enlisted through the idea of a cooperative church. Some of these people may go so far as to become church members. Others will contribute more liberally than they have formerly done although they may not feel ready for membership. This will compensate somewhat for the loss of a few who are opposed to the joining of the two churches. Enlistment of these new supporters is one of the most valuable accomplishments of the federating movement.

The good will of the members and friends of the churches can be fostered by having the leaders of the movement visit them in person. At least, the key people should be seen and if the entire membership can be called upon so much the better. The purpose of this personal contact is to explain the proposed plan of cooperation and to secure their opinions concerning it. Some of them will object for various reasons. All objections must be courteously heard and noted. Later it will be necessary to deal with them. Discussion of the federation idea at congregational meetings, church services and official board meetings will help to develop it in the minds of the people. Further opinions and suggestions will be expressed in these meetings and a fine foundation will be laid for further developments of organization. It is a good thing to invite into these conferences any possible supporters who are not at present a part of the churches.

Denominational officials must not be neglected in the survey. Presbyterial or Synodical Executives, District Superintendents, Presiding Elders, Bishops or any other officials who have jurisdiction or may be involved in the mechanics of the move should be taken into confidence.

Surveying the Field

Their attitude can easily bring success or failure. Their suggestions, based upon a wide experience, are much to be desired. This is especially necessary if the new church is to receive missionary aid, since in order to do so it must have the approval of the denominational authorities. But regardless of the advantages of consulting such leaders, common courtesy demands it. In the preliminary work of forming the El Dorado County Federated Church, already mentioned, this principle was applied with great profit. Dr. Warren H. Wilson, and Dr. Mark A. Dawber, Home Missions Board Secretaries in charge of rural work in the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., and The Methodist Episcopal Church respectively gave valuable assistance and suggestions, visiting the field in person for a conference with local leaders. Bishop C. W. Burns, Dr. F. K. Baker, Methodist District Superintendent, and Rev. Ralph W. Bayless, Presbyterian Executive, who were in still closer contact added their influence and wisdom to the consummation of the union.

Another step in the survey of possibilities taken by the church just mentioned was to invite pastors and leading laymen of neighboring Federated and Community churches to confer with local leaders. Through addresses and discussion in conference gatherings these pioneers in federation told of their experience and success and greatly increased the confidence of the people in the new plan. The visiting men offered advice as to steps of organization and made available copies of the Articles of Federation, Constitutions or By-Laws governing the operation of the churches to which they belonged.

When the Presbytery, Conference, or governing body

Uniting for Larger Service

having jurisdiction from the denominational standpoint meets, it should be informed of the projected plan of federation. This will avoid a hurried consideration of the final plan of union when it is ready to be presented for final action. The cooperation of these governing bodies is absolutely necessary for ultimate success, since to go into effect the plan must have their approval. Further suggestions as to procedure may come from the deliberations of these bodies and they will be found generally favorable to any plan which can be fairly evolved to bring about a more effective religious program in any community. All such contacts help pave the way for a successful federation and should be included in the preliminary survey.

III

STEPS IN ORGANIZATION

“MOVE carefully and build solidly,” should be the maxim of any who attempt to organize a Federated Church. Some people will be suspicious of the move. There will arise the fear that the proposed union is a scheme wherein one church or the other will take unfair advantage. Some people will be prejudiced against it for little or no reason except that it is a new way of doing things. While the change in organization is taking place, thoughtless acts and words on the part of those who promote the union may prevent it, delay it or linger as a “thorn in the flesh” of some sensitive souls for months or years after the federation is accomplished. To prevent later unrest, care and tact are essential.

Be patient. Ideas like this must have time to grow. Human beings, in the large, are conservative. They like the time worn trails and the tested ways of doing things. Innovations such as the federation of two churches will come with something of a shock to some people, and time will be required to reconcile them to the change. They can have no confidence in the proposal until they have time to get used to it. A good illustration of the patience in promoting a federation can be seen in a certain community where a successful Federated Church has been

Uniting for Larger Service

operating for more than six years. In this community, the minutes of congregational and other official meetings of the united churches show that the first mention of the federation idea was made officially more than six years before the churches were finally joined. Sow the seed early. Cultivate it tactfully as the opportunities come. Don't force it. Give it time to grow solidly. In your case, it may not take six years, but do not be discouraged if it does. The final result of a united Christian work in the community is worth waiting for, if patience means success.

Remove all possible obstacles or stumbling blocks. One of the most common obstacles is the ministers. Pastors who have overstayed their time or do not appeal to one or more of the congregations involved may be the cause of a negative vote when the plan of union is presented, unless it is understood that the new church will be at liberty to call a new man for its pastor. It should therefore be agreed that both or all of the present pastors shall resign, their resignation to take effect at the time of actual federation, if not before. This will leave the united body free to call its own ministers and undergo a complete change of leadership if that is desirable. It is quite possible that one or more of the pastors who have been serving the community will be retained by the new Federated Church. Even so, he should open the way for any who do not wish him to remain to express themselves. It will do him no harm to tender his resignation, even though the people may refuse to accept it. Any other obstacles from the standpoint of leadership should be similarly dealt with.

Cultivate the friendship of the congregations which

Steps in Organization

should unite. Whenever the opportunity comes for them to work together in some community enterprise, seek such cooperation. For instance, churches may cooperate in a religious census or survey of the town or city. Where it is the custom of the merchants to close their shops between noon and three o'clock on Good Friday, representatives may work together in placing closing cards giving notice of the observance in the store windows with the permission of the shop-keepers. In the author's own community, a distinct impression of Christian fellowship was made upon the community when the Roman Catholic Priest and a Protestant Clergyman were seen walking down the street in a friendly manner, engaged in this very task. Special days such as Thanksgiving Day, and Good Friday furnish excellent opportunities for union church services. Summer services during the period when attendances drop may be made more enthusiastic by united worship. An exchange of pulpits by the local pastors will help.

Let the pastors preach occasionally on themes connected with church unity. This will further accustom the people to the idea and will show that there are scriptural sanctions for it. John 10:16, Romans 12:5, Gal. 3:28, and John 17 contain thoughts in harmony with federation and the unity of Christian forces, and the reader will be able to find other references which may be used for this purpose. Other plans for laying a foundation for the federation by united effort may grow naturally out of the local situation.

Prayer is an indispensable guide. No human mind can be infallible. This is especially true in the uniting of

Uniting for Larger Service

churches. Quiet moments in touch with Infinite will be essential factors in the life of leaders who would plan a successful union of churches. The way past many difficulties and the prevention of many mistakes will be accomplished before the mercy seat.

With these elements of advice in mind, let us now turn to the actual steps of organization. Let us assume that the survey has been made, the seed sown and cultivated, and that the time has come to act. Each church which contemplates entering the federation should now call a congregational meeting for the purpose of appointing a committee incident to the work of organization. The committee should consist of an agreed number of representatives from each church whose duty it will be to confer and formulate a definite plan and program of union. Once these representatives are appointed they should be called together as soon as possible and organized by election of a chairman, secretary, and such other officers as may be deemed wise.

The business of this committee is now to develop a form of united organization which will fit the local situation. For this purpose they should have every available help. They should be in possession of the Articles of Federation or Constitution of one or more successful Federated Churches. Any books or literature on the subject will help the committee in its task. Original ideas on the subject contributed by committee members should not be neglected, for all the wisdom of the world regarding Federated Churches is not recorded history. Conference with leaders of other Federated Churches may be used with profit in securing the necessary information.

Steps in Organization

After a study of possible plans and the recording of as many suggestions as the members of the joint-committee have to offer, a sub-committee may well be appointed to draft Articles of Federation or whatever the people may desire to call the constitution governing the new church. If it is desired, the entire committee may draft the plan, but as a usual thing, a small sub-committee is most efficient in doing such work. If a sub-committee is used for this purpose, the entire committee should review the plan drafted by them and either approve it or offer suggestions for its improvement. When the joint committee has finally approved the plan it is ready to be presented to the congregations.

In preparation for the congregational meetings which will now soon be called, to approve or reject the plan, the people must be thoroughly informed as to its provisions. Copies of the Articles of Federation should be sent to every voting member of all or both uniting congregations. This is not difficult in these days of mimeographs and other duplicating machines. Common sense, moreover, will tell anyone that these copies should be sent out at least two weeks before the meetings at which the plan will be put to a vote. If the joint committee deems it wise, even more time may be allowed.

Preparation should be made to record as large a vote of those qualified as possible. There may be a considerable number of voters unable to attend the meetings. Therefore, it will be a good thing to devise some system of absent-voters or proxy ballots so as to record the opinions of those prevented from being present. Unless a large majority of all of the uniting churches vote for the union,

Uniting for Larger Service

it should not be attempted. When the Federated Church at Placerville, California, was organized the people agreed that three fourths of the membership of each church should be the required vote to bind the adoption of the Articles of Federation. Although the three fourths vote was secured in favor of the Federation in each case, the harmony of the united church was not quite perfect in the beginning.

To convey the information concerning the proposed federation to the people as suggested above, some such letter as the following should be mailed to all voters together with a copy of the proposed Articles of Federation in preparation for the meeting at which ratification or rejection thereof will take place.

Placerville, Calif.,
Feb. 28, 1927.

TO THE MEMBERS AND REGULAR SUPPORTERS OF THE
PLACERVILLE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH:

DEAR FRIENDS:

The committee recently appointed by the Official Board of the Methodist Church to meet with a similar committee elected by the First Presbyterian Church of Placerville to consider the federation of the two churches, submits the enclosed plan of federation, worked out by the joint committee for your consideration.

The plan has the approval of Bishop C. W. Burns, District Superintendent F. K. Baker, and the Sacramento Presbytery. It is in harmony with the recommendations of Rev. Mark A. Dawber and Rev. Warren H. Wilson representing the Rural Work Departments of the Home

Steps in Organization

Missions Boards of the two churches. It was approved by a four to one vote in the Congregational Meeting of the Presbyterian Church held Feb. 27, 1927.

Please give the plan of federation your careful consideration and register your vote at the meeting to be held at the close of the morning service, Sunday March 13, 1927. If unable to be present at the meeting, you have the privilege of mailing your ballot to Mrs. George Jaeger, 19 Spring St., Placerville, Calif. Ballots must be mailed early enough to reach Mrs. Jaeger not later than March 12 in order to be counted in the results.

Very Cordially yours,
The Committee
MALCOLM WRIGHT
MRS. JESSIE BATTELLE
A. S. Fox
MRS. A. A. TUCKER (*Alternate Member*)

When these letters are sent out for the information of the people, congregational meetings should be regularly and legally called both in accordance with the law of the church and the law of the state respecting religious corporations. In the call, a full statement of the purpose of the meeting should appear, and specific recitation should be made therein that the meeting is called for consideration of the plan of union, and for adoption, revision or rejection thereof.

In the meantime some rumblings of opposition will be heard. These should be traced to their source and personal visits should be made to those who have objections to offer. Very often these objections will be found to be

Uniting for Larger Service

based on misinformation. The objectors should therefore be heard courteously, and tactfully corrected in their information where they are mistaken. Much opposition to the plan can be overcome by such education.

There will be some who cannot be won over. Sometimes, although they are very much in the minority such people will raise the impression that there is an ominous opposition to union. In one community known well to the author, three people succeeded in preventing a federation of two churches of about fifty members each. Those favoring union should not be discouraged by mere "noise" or the created impression of serious opposition. Not until the vote is actually taken by the participating congregations will the actual number favoring or opposed to the plan be known. When it comes to the final decision, let the majority rule. It may result in the loss of a few supporters but this loss will be made up later by accessions of others who favor the movement. Some of those who oppose federation in the beginning will be won over when the new work is successful, and although they drop out at first will return.

The congregational meetings having been duly called and assembled, the proposed Articles of Federation should be thoroughly discussed. Opportunity should be given for the expression of as many as desire to speak. After full consideration of all ideas presented in discussion, the vote may be called for by a motion to adopt, reject or recommend a change in the articles. Any amendments or recommendations for change in the plan drafted by the committee would, of course, have to be ratified by the other congregations involved since all must agree on a

Steps in Organization

single basis of federation. Inasmuch as there will be included in the Articles of Federation a provision for their amendment, minor changes in the plan can easily be made after the federation takes effect. Upon this basis, it should be urged that only major difficulties should enter into a recommendation for amendment at the meeting called for action on the plan of union. Center the thoughts of the people as much as possible on the main issue which is, shall we or shall we not federate?

If the Articles of Federation are approved, they may take effect on a date prescribed in the articles themselves. Otherwise the date must be agreed upon in some other way. If the approval of the denominational authorities has not been secured, this is of course necessary before the date can be fixed, or the federation proceed. If the plan is rejected, it may be desired that the committee for drafting a plan be continued for the drafting of a new plan, or there may be an unconditional refusal to federate.

It is preferable that the plan of union be acted upon by the Presbytery, Conference or other governing bodies having jurisdiction before it comes to a vote in the local congregations. It would be a sore disappointment indeed for the local people to act upon the federation favorably, only to find that the plan must be revised to meet with denominational sanction. The approval of any denominational executives should be obtained prior to the approval of the governing bodies. Be sure that all bodies and leaders who have authority in the matter approve the plan so that the organic union may be complete.

Another precaution in the beginning should include the keeping of due records. The minutes of the meetings of

Uniting for Larger Service

the congregations at which the federation plan is adopted should be accurately recorded and carefully preserved. Likewise the record should be made complete of any action taken by the Presbytery, Conference, or other governing body. The loss of the record of such actions can cause future trouble. Verbal agreements are easily forgotten and confused, and the changes in church membership and leadership render them particularly perishable. One federation was completely wrecked because the record was not complete upon the Conference minutes. As long as the District Superintendent under whom the federation was established remained in office all went well. But when a new Superintendent was appointed who did not favor church cooperation, a pastor from his denomination was sent into the community. He was able to rally a group of disgruntled people, took possession of the denominational property and began holding services in competition to the Federated Church. A protest was made by the people loyal to the federation but it was useless because there was nothing on the Conference minutes to prove the consent of that body to the Federation. Moral: Be sure that the records of all actions having to do with the federating of the churches are complete and permanent.

All necessary consent having been given, the organization of the new church proceeds in accordance with the Articles of Federation. The people must meet jointly and in denominational groups for the election of the Board of Control, Boards of Trustees, Elders, Stewards, Deacons and other necessary officials. The legality of votes and voters at such meetings is determined also by the Articles of Federation.

Steps in Organization

As soon as possible, necessary paid leadership should be procured. A pastor or pastors, religious education director, parish worker or whatever other workers the church needs and can afford should be chosen from the denominations represented in the federation. The Board of Control must meet soon after election for organization and the conduct of business. Certain matters of policy and program will have to be agreed upon in the beginning. The Sunday School must be united, a sufficient corps of teachers and officers appointed to care for the enlarged group, and adequate quarters should be provided for all departments. The Women's Organizations such as the Ladies Aids should be brought together and reorganized. Missionary Societies, Young Peoples' Societies, boys' and girls' clubs and any other organizations connected with the separate churches should be given a place in the new church program. If they are small they may be well united. If they are large enough to work separately and desire to continue so that may be the tactful thing to suggest, but in any case, let the Federated Church approve and encourage their work so as to promote harmony. All of these matters of organization will receive fuller discussion in the appropriate chapters.

IV

ARTICLES OF FEDERATION

THE agreement under which the local congregations undertake the united program, and the regulations for the operation of it are contained in the Articles of Federation, or whatever document may serve as a constitution of the Federated Church. For the guidance of those readers who may wish to organize federated churches or who for other reasons may be interested in their form of government, we here include the Articles of Federation of two such churches both of which have been in successful operation for a period of more than six years. The first is the agreement of the Federated Church of Orland, California.

ARTICLES OF FEDERATION AND BY-LAWS OF THE FEDERATED CHURCH OF ORLAND

I

Name

The name of this organization is the Federated Church of Orland and it shall be incorporated under that name.

Articles of Federation

II

Purpose

Feeling that the work of the church has been too much divided and that it can better be done by uniting forces, we desire to begin a federation that will more effectively honor Christ, serve the needs of the community better and share more largely in the world-wide kingdom.

III

Membership

The membership of this church shall be composed of the members of the churches embraced in the federation, at present, the Methodist Episcopal Church of Orland and the Trinity Presbyterian Church of Orland. New members joining either church embraced in the federation thereby become active members in the federated organization. Members shall be publicly received into the church by the pastor, uniting with the church of their choice and shall be baptized according to the wishes of the applicant.

IV

Government

The Federated Church of Orland shall be governed by a council which shall be constituted as follows: seven members to be elected annually from each church represented in the federation. The pastor, also all presidents, superintendents, heads of departments, and presidents of organizations of the church shall automatically become ex-officio members. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

Uniting for Larger Service

V

Properties

The use of properties of the respective churches shall be determined by the Council of the Federated Church, and, so far as is consistent with the laws and usages of the churches embraced in the federation, the local properties shall be merged into a common property belonging to and under the control of the Federated Church of Orland, a Corporation.

VI

Church Expenses and Benevolences

The local expenses of the Federated Church shall be met by an annual canvass of the membership and adherents of the churches which constitute this federation and by such other methods as shall be decided upon from time to time. The manner of handling the benevolences shall be in accordance with the laws and usages of the denominations embraced in the federation and any amount raised for benevolences by any denomination shall be subject to the control of that denomination.

VII

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting and election of this church shall be held at the building where the members hold their religious services, and shall be on the second Wednesday of January of each year. Fifty of the members shall constitute a quorum but a lesser number may adjourn from time to time until a quorum is present. The officers elected at each annual meeting shall take office immediately after

Articles of Federation

the organization of the Council following the annual election.

VIII

The Council

Regular meetings of the council shall be held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 P.M. and shall be held at the building where the members hold their religious services, and no notice of such meeting shall be necessary. Special meetings may be called by the President of the Council or the pastor of the church and the only notice necessary shall be the announcement of the time of such meeting at the church service on the Sunday preceding such meeting; or a written notice of such meeting may be mailed by the secretary or president or pastor to each member of the Council at his residence or place of business at least twenty-four hours before the time of holding such meeting.

At the first meeting following the annual election of officers the Council shall elect one of their number president, one vice-president, one secretary, and one treasurer. These officers shall perform the usual duties of their respective offices. The pastor shall be the Moderator, and the secretary of the Council shall act as secretary of all congregational meetings. The Treasurer of the Council shall be chairman of the Finance Committee.

The Council shall further divide into five groups, namely: a board of six Trustees, the same to be allotted equally to the Churches represented in the federation; a board of six elders; a finance committee of twelve members; a music committee of three members and an auditing committee of three.

Uniting for Larger Service

At the regular meeting of the Council in December of each year, a nominating committee shall be elected from the church membership outside the Council whose duty shall be to prepare the list of nominations for the annual election of officers which shall be done as follows: on the second Sunday preceding the annual meeting of the church the chairman of the nominating committee shall announce to the members at the church service that all members of the church are invited to make nominations for membership to the Council. These nominations shall be written and dropped into the collection plate on the Sunday last preceding the annual meeting. The nominating committee shall thereafter take all these nominations and arrange them on a ballot and furthermore shall have power to add sufficient names to the list to make possible two nominees for every place on the Council. Upon the completion of this list it shall be printed in the form of a ballot to be submitted to the members of the church at the annual meeting and election in January.

The Council shall act as an executive body to receive and consider plans and recommendations from various boards and committees and shall have general oversight of all matters of interest to the church.

If a vacancy occurs on the Council, the Council may fill such vacancy until the next annual election.

IX

Duties of Permanent Boards and Committees

The Trustees shall have supervision of all church property under the control of the Federated Church. They shall make and execute all contracts on behalf of the Fed-

Articles of Federation

erated Church. They shall submit statements of proposed expenditures to the Council for consideration. The Trustees may appoint one of their number as custodian of the church property.

It shall be the duty of the Board of Elders to lead in all things pertaining to the Spiritual welfare of the church and to assist when required in the administration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. In the absence of a pastor, this committee shall constitute the pulpit supply committee.

The Finance Committee under the direction of the Treasurer shall prepare the annual budget to be submitted to the Council for approval. This committee with an equal number chosen from the church at large shall attend to the raising of the annual budget.

The music committee shall have supervision of all matters pertaining to the church music. It shall be the duty of this committee to recommend to the Council purchases and appointments in this department.

It shall be the duty of the auditing committee to audit and certify the books of all departments of the church for presentation to the annual church meeting.

X

Selection of Pastor

In case of a change of pastors the Council shall act in conjunction with the District Superintendent of the Methodist Church and the Presbyterial or Synodical Executive of the Presbyterian Church in filling such vacancy. If at

Uniting for Larger Service

any time an assistant pastor should be chosen, he shall be selected from the denomination not having the pastor.

XI

Communion Service

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be administered on the first Sabbath of every third month beginning with January of each year. The invitation shall be to all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in truth and sincerity.

XII

Amendments

These Articles of Federation may be amended at any time by the written assent of two thirds of the members or by a vote of two thirds of the members present at the annual meeting; providing any proposed amendment shall have been read at two successive morning services prior to its presentation for adoption.

By-Laws

The order of business for Council meetings shall be as follows:

Opening Prayer

Roll Call

Reading of Minutes

Communications and Accounts

Reports

Elections

Old Business

New Business

Articles of Federation

Miscellaneous Items

Adjournment.

The order of business for the Annual Church Meetings shall be as follows :

Devotional Period

Reading of Minutes

Annual Roll Call

Reports of Heads of Departments

Election of Officers

Miscellaneous Business

Adjournment

All meetings of the Church and Council shall open and close with prayer.

All elections shall be by ballot.

Roberts' Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority for all cases not governed by the Constitution and By-Laws.

These By-Laws may be amended or suspended at any business meeting by a majority vote of the members present.

Now follows the text of the Articles of Federation of the El Dorado County Federated Church centered at Placerville, California. This church illustrates a somewhat different type of organization due to the fact that it operates on a Larger Parish Plan, ministering to several communities. Another feature is that it employs two pastors instead of one as the ordinary Federated Church would do.

Uniting for Larger Service

ARTICLES OF FEDERATION
OF
THE EL DORADO COUNTY FEDERATED CHURCH

I

Purpose

The First Presbyterian Church of Placerville and The Methodist Episcopal Church of Placerville are in existence at the present time, (March 1927) each has property interests, each is maintaining a program of services and work in Placerville, each is assisting in religious work in other points in El Dorado County outside Placerville, each desires to continue its denominational work and identity and its affiliation with its parent organization; but, believing that the Kingdom of Christ can be better promoted by a unified program of work that shall embrace the entire county than by maintaining two separate programs these two churches purpose to unite and form a Federated Church, and to invite members of other denominations to join them therein. It is the purpose of the Federated Church to hold united religious services instead of separate services for each denomination in Placerville and in other places in El Dorado County, and to provide a program of religious services and religious education that shall touch, as far as possible, the entire County.

II

Name

The name of this organization shall be EL DORADO COUNTY FEDERATED CHURCH.

Articles of Federation

III

Membership

The membership of the Federated Church shall be made up of the members of the First Presbyterian Church of Placerville, the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Placerville, the members of the Methodist Episcopal Churches of Georgetown and Coloma, when these organizations by approval of these Articles of Federation express their desire to be members of the Federated Church; and members of any other Protestant denominational organization of the County that may by approval of these Articles of Federation express their wish to be members of the Federated Church. New members received into either the Methodist Episcopal Church or the Presbyterian Church shall thereby become members of the Federated Church and shall be publicly received by one of the pastors. Persons who desire to unite with the Federated Church and who do not desire to unite with either the Methodist Church or the Presbyterian Church, may unite in affiliated membership. The Board of Control of the church shall have power to determine the privileges and conditions of affiliated membership.

IV

Government

In order to preserve the denominational identity of the federating churches, each shall elect annually a denominational board according to the usual custom of electing officials in that church. It shall be the duty of these denominational boards to care for the property interests of

Uniting for Larger Service

their respective churches, to receive and forward to the proper officials benevolent funds, and to have charge of granting letters of transfer to members of their respective churches. Any denominational board may meet and transact business pertaining to its denomination which does not affect the partner organizations, and may transact any business delegated to it by the Board of Control of the Federated Church.

The Federated Church shall be governed by a Board of Control consisting of nine members, of whom four shall be elected by the Methodist Episcopal Church, four by the Presbyterian Church, and one member at large, not a member of either denomination, who shall be elected by ballot at a meeting of the membership of the Federated Church. Affiliated members of the Federated Church shall be entitled to vote at this election. Twenty per cent of the membership of the Federated Church shall constitute a quorum.

Each community where services are regularly held under the direction of the Federated Church shall be entitled to a representative at the meetings of the Board of Control for the purpose of advising concerning the program of work for the County.

The Board of Control shall decide concerning the use of the properties of the denominational bodies for the work of the Federated Church; shall have charge of the canvass for funds for the joint budget; shall be the advisory board to plan with the pastors the program of work; shall employ such janitors as may be necessary to care for the properties while used by the Federated Church; may delegate to any denominational board any

Articles of Federation

matters connected with the work of the Federated Church; shall elect such committees as may be necessary to supervise various lines of church work, such as church music, religious education, young people's work, etc. The Board of Control shall consult with the denominational authorities of the Methodist Annual Conference and the Presbytery concerning the appointment of ministers or parish workers of the Federated Church.

v

Budget and Benevolences

The running expenses of the Federated Church shall be met by annual canvass of the people of the County and by such other methods as the Board of Control may decide to use from time to time. The budget of the Federated Church shall include insurance on church properties, repairs which the Board of Control may decide necessary for the convenient use of property in the Federated Church, apportionments for ministerial relief or pension funds, and apportionments for denominational supervision in both denominations.

Offerings for various benevolent enterprises of the two denominations shall be divided as the donors may direct. Benevolent contributions not designated for either denomination shall be equally divided between the two denominations. Public presentation of the benevolent interests of the two denominations shall be made without discrimination in favor of either.

Uniting for Larger Service

VI

Property

Ownership of property of the federating churches is unchanged by this federation, but the use of property shall be determined by the Board of Control.

VII

Ministers

To fully carry out the purposes of this federation, "to provide religious services and a program of religious education as far as possible to all of El Dorado County" will require two or more ministers. One of the ministers shall be regularly appointed by the California Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church and another shall be chosen according to the method of ministerial appointment of the Presbyterian Church. The Board of Control shall consult with the denominational authorities of the Conference and Presbytery concerning the appointment of ministers, and shall designate the senior and associate pastors.

VIII

Organizations Within the Churches

Upon adoption of this plan of federation the Board of Control shall take immediate steps to consolidate the young peoples organizations and Sunday School work in the city of Placerville. The consolidation of other organizations is recommended, but is left to the respective organizations.

Articles of Federation

IX

Approval and Organization

To become effective, this plan of federation must be approved by the denominational authorities of the Annual Conference and the Presbytery and submitted to a vote of the members of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches of Placerville. Every member of each church shall be entitled to vote either at a meeting of the congregation or by mailing his ballot to the secretary of his organization at least one day prior to such meeting. The plan of federation must be approved in each church by three fourths of the members voting.

When approved by the denominational authorities and church membership, each denomination shall elect its representatives to the Board of Control and a meeting of the two organizations shall be held for the purpose of electing the member at large on said Board. When all members of the Board of Control are duly elected, the direction of the affairs of the federating churches shall be assumed by said Board of Control.

X

Annual Meeting

There shall be held an annual meeting of the members of the Federated Church for the purpose of electing the member at large on the Board of Control and such other business as the Board of Control may determine. Time and place of such meeting shall be determined by the Board of Control.

Uniting for Larger Service

XI

Meetings of Board of Control

The Board of Control shall meet monthly. Time and place of such monthly meetings shall be determined by the Board, and no notice of such meetings shall be necessary. Special meetings may be called by the chairman of the Board of Control or by the Pastor, and announcement of time and place of such meeting at the regular church services on the Sunday preceding the meeting, or notification of each member of the Board at least twelve hours prior to such meeting shall be sufficient announcement of special meetings. Any meeting at which all members of the Board of Control are present is a legal meeting without prior notice thereof.

XII

Officers

The Board of Control shall elect a President, a vice president, and a secretary from the membership of the Board. Treasurers of funds for local budget and for funds for benevolences need not be members of the Board of Control.

XIII

Amendments

Amendments to these Articles of Federation may be made at any annual meeting of the membership of the Federated Church, or at a special meeting called for the consideration of amendments. Proposed amendments shall be approved by a majority of the Board of Control and by a majority of the members present and voting, at a meeting of the congregation of the Federated Church.

V

GOVERNING BOARDS

THE choice of the governing board for the administration of a Federated Church is of the utmost importance. To this board will be delegated matters of policy and direction of the church's activity in general. It must have a definite name. Its personnel must be carefully selected. Its members must be faithful to their duties, for its planning and direction will determine the success or failure of the Federated Church.

The name varies in different churches. Some prefer to call this body the Board of Control. Others call it the Official Board or the Governing Board. The choice of a name may be determined by the taste of the local church. For convenience, we will refer to it hereafter as the Board of Control.

The personnel of the Board of Control should be chosen so as to give equal representation thereon to each denominational body participating. For instance, if there are three churches uniting it might be arranged to elect three of each group to membership on the Board. This plan would furnish an uneven number of members which would prevent a "deadlock" in case of a vote on some disputed matter. If there are only two churches uniting, representation from each should be numerically the same. In this case four might be elected from each group and to

Uniting for Larger Service

prevent a "deadlock," provision could be made for a member at large, not necessarily a member of the church, who is elected by the entire membership of the Federated Church. For the purpose of electing this officer and transacting other necessary business, an annual meeting should be held of the whole congregation. Provision for calling this meeting and conducting it should be a part of the Articles of Federation.

Each denominational group should elect its own representatives to the Board of Control. Just as congressmen are elected by districts, to represent particular districts, so the Board members should be elected exclusively by the branch of the church which they represent. It is necessary for each denominational membership to have or continue its annual meetings at which time its board representatives will be chosen. Other necessary officers may be elected also at this meeting and any matters which concern the denominational group alone may be discussed or transacted at this time. In these denominational business meetings, the united congregations are governed in their actions both by the Articles of Federation and by the discipline and form of government of their denominations.

If there is an Affiliated membership, the member at large on the Board of Control may be, and usually is chosen from among that group. This offers the advantage of having a Board composed entirely of church members, who are more apt to rule in a way which is spiritually wholesome. Until the Affiliated membership is built up, however, the choice of the member at large from their group may be impossible or inexpedient.

Governing Boards

Shall the pastors be members of the Board of Control? This is a disputed question. In denominational churches pastors are frequently members of the Official Board. Presbyterian ministers are moderators of the Session and regular voting members thereof. Methodist pastors are members of the Quarterly Conference of the church they serve. Other examples might be quoted, to show that this plan has worked successfully for years in denominational churches.

A Federated Church, however, presents a different situation. Where such a church has a single pastor, if he were a member of the Board it would give his denomination a larger representation than the others. Even in the case of a plurality of pastors, there may be times when one or the other of the pastorate is vacant. In that case also one denomination would be more largely represented than the other.

In a successful Federated Church a difficult situation arose through the election of a minister as one of the allotted representatives of one of the denominational groups involved. Since he was one of the allotted number from his group his membership did not result in unequal representation on the Board. However, he was not only of a domineering personality, but he was biased toward his own denomination. His unfair attitudes nearly caused a split in the church. So deep was the impression upon the church of this unfortunate action, that when the minister's term of office expired the church refused to re-elect him and amended the Articles of Federation so that they now read "No ordained minister of any denomination shall ever be a member of the Board of Control." The

Uniting for Larger Service

writer's experience in his own pastorate in a Federated Church inclines him to the opinion that pastors should not be members of this body.

Although the Articles of Federation prevent the pastors from being members of the Board this does not necessarily exclude them from its meetings. In fact, they should always attend in an advisory capacity except on occasions when the Board may wish to meet in executive session. When matters relating personally to the pastors are being discussed the members of the Board can talk more freely and with less embarrassment if the pastors are not there. Under ordinary circumstances, though, the presence of the pastors is valuable and often necessary.

The type of people chosen to serve on the Board of Control is important. Obviously they must be people whose moral character is unquestioned. They should be people of good business judgment, level headed and not given to fanciful thinking. They should be spiritually minded. They should be such as command the respect of the community and furnish a good example of Godly living for the congregation. In short they should be chosen as carefully as the Session or ruling official board of any denominational church. Since most of our denominational churches now admit women to rulership in the church, it is common for Federated Churches to have women on the Board of Control. This has its advantages in keeping the Board in touch with the work which the women of the church are doing.

This board being the supreme governing body of the local church has within its power the final determination of all matters of policy. Questions such as "Who shall

Governing Boards

be permitted to preach in the church other than the pastors?" and, "What appeals for funds may be made in the services?" and similar matters are within its province to decide. The planning of the church program in general is in its hands, as well as the oversight thereof. It may delegate particular matters to the pastors, committees, boards of trustees or other responsible parties, but even though some discretion is permitted to such recipients of responsibility, they are always accountable to the Board of Control.

It should decide concerning the use of church buildings and other equipment. It should determine what meetings may be held in them and by whom, and for what other purposes they may be used. This is highly important to the coordination and harmony of a Federated Church. It prevents any denominational group which may suddenly take a divisive course from using any of the church properties for a purpose which would conflict with the united program.

In one community where a Presbyterian and a Methodist Episcopal Church had formed a federation, an itinerant minister claiming to belong to another faith came to town and after an interview with one of the trustees of the Presbyterian property secured the key thereto for the purpose of holding a "revival service." This service was to be held at the same time as and in competition with the service of the Federated Church. Further developments showed that it was evidently intended as a move toward rallying any who might be opposed to the federation idea for the possible formation of a new church. The federation, however, had just succeeded in eliminating

Uniting for Larger Service

one church from the community and the people were not disposed to encourage any work which would undo the cooperative task accomplished in the union. It was a very fortunate thing that the Board of Control had been given power to act in preventing the use of church property of their own bodies for purposes not in harmony with the united work. Accordingly they countermanded the permission to use the building which had been granted by the trustees and the divisive course of the itinerant preacher was ended in the beginning.

The Board of Control should have oversight of all finances of the church both as to the collection and the disbursement thereof. It is their power and duty to plan and conduct the annual every member canvass for raising the necessary funds both for current expenses and benevolence. They determine the budget of annual expenditure. They appoint a treasurer for the church, who should report monthly to them on the financial condition of the church. They may delegate to denominational boards of trustees and other committees within the Federated Church the matter of raising funds for denominational use if that seems best, but they should have final control over the policies both as to raising and expending such funds.

The Board of Control has oversight of the working staff of the church. Pastors, Religious Education Directors, Sextons, Janitors, and any other paid officers are under their direction. The Board decides upon their salaries, the extent of their duties, and except in the case of pastors may be given power to employ or discharge such paid workers as to them may seem wise. Pastors, of course, are secured by the regular denominational proced-

Governing Boards

ure which would involve the action of the entire congregation.

The Board may make recommendations to the congregation, Presbytery, Conference or other body having jurisdiction concerning the call or appointment of ministers. Usually the Articles of Federation will make it the duty of the Board of Control to consult with the denominational authorities concerning the appointment of ministers or parish workers. If there is more than one pastor, it may seem wise to have one designated as the Senior Pastor. If so the Board should have power to determine which man shall be placed in leadership. If this matter were left to a majority vote, the congregation having the larger membership within the federated group might easily elect its own pastor for prejudicial reasons. The representation of each denominational branch in the Board of Control, on the other hand, is equal, therefore the Board of Control is more likely to make an impartial decision for the welfare of the church. The pastors should make a full report of their work monthly to the Board of Control, and should not attempt any program or church activity which does not have its approval.

Directors of Religious Education and other parish workers employed by the church are likewise responsible to the Board of Control. They should report their work and plans monthly to the Board as do the other leaders and officers of the church.

An efficient Board of Control will seek every possible avenue for the extension of the church. By suitable advertising they will seek to attract new people to the church. Suitable signs on the church and elsewhere, bulletin boards,

Uniting for Larger Service

newspapers, and other legitimate advertising channels may be found helpful in disseminating information concerning the church and its work should be used under the direction of the Board. Frequently the Board will delegate this work to a committee or to one of the pastors. The approval of the Board should be secured for the issuance of church calendars, bulletins or circular letters, especially when appeals for funds are made by this means. If a committee takes charge of the publicity, it should work in close harmony with the ministers and other leaders of church activity so that the various services and meetings may be correctly announced and reported. The Board should be the final judge as to the suitability of any publicity methods.

The Board of Control determines whether the church shall undertake new work in any other community, whether it shall sponsor Boy Scout Troops, Camp Fire Girls, or other organizations for young people and directs the operation of all such contacts which may bring new people into touch with the church. The Board should seek in every possible way to increase church attendance, add to church membership and increase the usefulness of the church to the community. The plans of the church should not neglect social welfare work. Worthy community projects sponsored by service clubs and other benevolent organizations should have the support of the Board and of the church. Instruction on moral issues should be kept in mind by the Board members as a contribution of the church to community life. If there is an Affiliated membership the Board of Control usually examines those who wish to unite with the church in this way, and

Governing Boards

determines, after hearing a confession of their faith, whether they should be admitted to full communion.

The Board cannot deal directly with every activity of a live church. However, it may keep in close contact with the detailed activities through committees which it appoints to supervise the varied branches and its work. Immediate oversight of the Sunday School, Young Peoples Societies, Boys and Girls Clubs, music, ushering, welcoming of strangers, any routine matters are customarily delegated to these committees. The appointment of a Sunday School Superintendent and of Adult Advisors for the children's and young people's groups should always be ratified by the Board. This furnishes a check on the character of the people permitted to function in these capacities. The organist, direction of the choir, and type of music to be used in the services are regulated by this body. The pastor alone cannot make strangers feel at home in a church. The Board members can be of great influence in increasing the membership of the church by seeing that people are at the door at every service for the express purpose of welcoming visitors and new people. Thus the impression of a friendly church is created. Details such as the ushering should never be left to the pastor in charge of any service. His mind should be centered upon the thought of the worship service and his spiritual ministry will be more effective if his mind is not cluttered with concern over the mechanical details.

The Board should meet monthly at a specified time, to hear the reports already alluded to, and to act on any business which comes before it. The Articles of Federation should provide for the calling of special meetings in

Uniting for Larger Service

case of emergency. Provision should also be made for the election from among its number of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and such other officers as it may need. Officers other than the first three mentioned need not be members of the Board, but it should be sufficiently officered from among its own membership to conduct its business with smoothness and dispatch. The Articles of Federation should specify how major officers are to be appointed and should specify or outline the general scope of their powers.

VI

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

EVERY organization must have a membership, and in a Federated Church it is particularly important that it shall be definitely understood who are members. The qualifications for membership and for voting at the business meetings of the church should be clearly determined by the Articles of Federation. Before a Board of Control can be elected, before a pastor can be called, before any organizational process of the new church can proceed it must be known to the people who can vote and deliberate in the congregational meetings. If the Articles of Federation include these qualifications, they may be used to settle all disputes concerning the rights of any individual. Disputes are most likely to arise in churches which allow contributors as well as members of the church to vote. In this case the term "contributor" should be defined in the Articles of Federation.

There are usually two types of membership in a Federated Church, denominational membership and affiliated membership. Denominational membership marks the member as a Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, or whatever may be the denominational branch with which he unites within the Federated Church. Affiliated membership does not enroll the applicant in any denomination but

Uniting for Larger Service

makes him a member in full standing of the Federated Church. Arrangements should be made to receive new members according to their choice, and whether they unite with one of the denominational groups or as affiliated members there should be no discrimination whatsoever. All must be made welcome upon a proper profession of faith, if the Federated Church is to accomplish its purpose.

The members of the uniting churches will, of course, become members of the Federated Church as soon as the union is consummated by adoption of the plan of federation. They have full communion and voting privileges both in the denominational groups and in the congregation of the Federated Church. They are entitled to vote for any denominational officers and to do their share in the transaction of any denominational business which may be necessary and in harmony with the united work. They can also vote for their denominational members of the Board of Control as well as for the member at large if there be a provision for the latter. New members are admitted into the denominational branches of the Federated Church according to the method customarily used by that denomination which they join.

Affiliated members should be received by a regular procedure set forth in the Articles of Federation. It is a good plan to have applicants for affiliated membership meet with a committee of the Board of Control before being publicly received so that their motives in uniting with the church may be understood. They have full privileges of communion, and of voting in the congrega-

Church Membership

tional meetings of the Federated Church, but would have no powers within the denominational groups.

And now, I think I can hear some readers asking, "Why have these different kinds of membership? Isn't this to be a united work? Why not have just one membership for all?" In reply it will be necessary to state several reasons why most Federated Churches thus group their membership.

First of all, the Federated Church maintains denominational connections if it is truly a "Federated Church." It desires representation in the Presbytery, the Annual Conference or whatever may be the governing bodies of the denominations involved, as well as the supervision of these bodies. The most orderly way for a Federated Church to have such representation is through the usual denominational type of organization. For instance, in the Presbyterian Church, only ministers and ruling elders may be members of Presbytery. Therefore a Federated Church should have a regular means of electing Presbyterian elders if it is to have its full representation in the Presbytery. It would be natural for the Presbyterian membership to be empowered to elect the elders just as they would in a denominational situation. Thus there can be no doubt as to the legality of their election or of their right to be members of Presbytery when properly appointed as representatives of the church.

The Session or group of elders elected by the Presbyterian membership are the spiritual leaders of that group among the laymen, and they work in subordination to the Board of Control of the Federated Church. They re-

Uniting for Larger Service

ceive and dismiss members of their denomination. They may also do any work which is committed to them by the Board of Control. Whatever the denominational groups involved, they should have their denominational organization within the Federated Church for the accomplishment of such denominational work as is necessary or expedient.

The next reason for divisions in membership is church property. Usually church property is looked upon as a trust. Real estate has been given or buildings erected by the church people or donors, as a rule, for a specific purpose. It may have been given "for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church exclusively," in which case it will probably be impossible to deed it over to an incorporated Federated Church. Sometimes there is a cloud on the title to some of the real estate making necessary litigation and legal processes of various kinds in order to secure a transferable title. It may be uncertain in the beginning how long the federation will last. Some members through lack of confidence in the new program may not be ready to "vote away" their church property until the federation has been proved by a period of successful operation. The church building may be a very delicate subject to deal with in any move so critical as a federation of churches. It is certain that one building or the other will be chosen for religious worship, which means that the other may be discarded to cut down the expense of property upkeep. In this case the building which goes out of use begins to deteriorate as all unused buildings do. This may be a disappointment to some of the people, and it is fitting that the future of such a

Church Membership

building should be in the hands of the people whose church home it has been.

Any building which has been one's church home for a period of years is a place of hallowed memories. When it is the scene of one's baptism, one's Sunday School experience, reception into the church, marriage, and perhaps of the funeral services for loved ones it becomes a sacred spot, and this it will be to many of the older members. Dealing unwisely with the property interests of the uniting groups in the beginning may therefore wreck the good ship of union on the shoals of untactfulness and undue haste. In the meantime, someone must own the real estate and be able to transact business concerning it and who would be better tenants thereof than those members of the church which have always owned it? They may hold the title to the properties and under the federation agreement permit them to be used under the direction of the Board of Control for the benefit of the united cause. In order to conduct the necessary business respecting the properties, each denominational group should maintain its own corporation and elect its Board of Trustees as directors thereof who serve under the direction of the Board of Control.

In almost every Federated Church the Board of Control will be elected by the denominational groups. Each denomination should elect its own representatives and there must be separate membership groups to make this possible.

Overhead assessments such as the per capita tax of

Uniting for Larger Service

the Presbyterian Church, District Superintendents and Bishops funds of the Methodist Church, and apportionments asked by the missionary boards would become a double burden on a Federated Church if it reported its full membership to each denomination involved, because these apportionments are usually based upon membership. It is quite convenient, therefore, for a Federated Church to be able to report, for instance, a Presbyterian membership to the Presbytery and a Methodist membership to the Annual Conference and have the assessments based upon these figures. Thus, the united church supports both denominations fairly and in proportion to the membership leaning toward each. Such are the advantages of denominational membership in a Federated Church.

In practically every community where there is a Federated Church there are Christian people who for various reasons do not care to unite with the denominations participating in the federation. To attract this group of people many Federated Churches have the Affiliated membership already referred to. Through it people may unite with the church and feel that they are truly a part of it without aligning themselves with any particular creed or denomination. They are accepted by the Federated Church as members in full standing with all of the spiritual privileges and obligations of any other member. This group if properly encouraged will add strength to the church. In the Federated Church of which the writer is a pastor, some of the best workers and supporters are members of the Affiliated group.

Church Membership

This membership has full voting power in all meetings of the federated congregation, but not in the denominational organizations. They may vote for the members at large on the Board of Control and may be elected to that office. This group often furnishes an excellent personnel from which to choose the member at large on the Board.

The Affiliated membership should not, as a rule, hold the balance of power in the Board of Control. Since the Federated Church is under the supervision of the participating denominations, since these denominations have fostered the uniting churches from their beginning, and since, frequently, the Home Missions Boards of these denominations are called upon to support the work through grants and loans on property or toward the ministers' salaries, it is only fair that the denominational groups should control its destiny. This seldom causes difficulty, as Affiliated membership is usually in the minority. As the number of this group grows, its representation on the Board of Control may well be increased, if this can be done without giving them a controlling power. Here every church must use its own discretion in view of the size and character of its Affiliated membership.

Whatever may be the technical divisions in the membership of a Federated Church there must be no discrimination in favor of any group in actual practice. All are now united in the common work of a single enterprise. Distinctions should never be drawn except where they are absolutely necessary to carry on the organization and even then they need not be emphasized. No matter what the denomination of the pastor, he is the shepherd of the

Uniting for Larger Service

whole flock. Denominational and affiliated members need and deserve the same pastoral care. The leadership of the church and the spirit of all should be such that the membership groups will be gradually bound closer and closer together through the practice of the Christian fellowship in a common task.

The requirements for admission to the denominational memberships in the Federated Church should be the same as for admission into any church of that faith according to its regular discipline. Whatever these requirements are they should be fully observed in receiving people into full communion. Admission to Affiliated membership should be no less strict. The candidate for this membership should be or have been baptised by the mode of his choice, and the church and its pastors should be prepared and willing to baptise by immersion or effusion as well as by sprinkling. The applicants should be examined by the Board of Control or by a committee of this body appointed for the purpose. The examination should consist of an inquiry into their faith in God and in Jesus Christ, their religious experience, their knowledge and use of the Bible, their willingness to apply themselves to the living of a Christian life, and their purpose as members to give reasonable support to the church. In connection with this examination it is well to give candidates the opportunity of asking any questions they may have concerning the work and organization of the church, or their duties and privileges as members. Since a Federated Church is different from the ordinary church in its organization and program this may be made a most valuable feature of the introduction of new members.

Church Membership

Following the examination, if the committee is satisfied and votes to receive the applicants into membership, they should be publicly received at a convenient time, preferably the regular Sunday morning or Sunday evening service. This public confession is not only a testimony of the faith of the new members which may encourage others to take the same stand, but it is a means of introducing the new people to the congregation at large. It strengthens the purpose of those who make the confession. It is in line with the spiritual challenge "Whosoever will confess Me before men, him will I confess before My Father who is in heaven." If the new members are to be baptised, this rite should also be a public ceremony except under unusual circumstances. In such cases the discretion of the pastors, Board of Control, Sessions or other receiving committees may usually be safely trusted.

Whether the new members come into the church on a denominational or affiliated basis it is an excellent practice to have one form of reception and the same confessional vows for all. Such a form of reception can be thoughtfully worked out by any Federated Church by combining elements of the orders for receiving members commonly used by the uniting denominations. It may be thought better to work out an entirely new ritual if the pastors are talented in that sort of thing. In the El Dorado County Federated Church a satisfactory ritual was devised by the two pastors. It was patterned largely after that of the Methodist Episcopal Church. A number of words and phrases which seemed objectionable were altered and certain additions were made to fit the local

Uniting for Larger Service

situation. This ritual is included here as a suggestion to others:

RECEPTION OF MEMBERS
ON
CONFESION OF FAITH
EL DORADO COUNTY FEDERATED CHURCH

Dearly Beloved, we are taught in the Scriptures that the Church is the household of God, the body of which Christ is the leader, and that it is the purpose of the Gospel to bring into one great fellowship all who are in Christ. The end of this fellowship is the salvation of men and the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth. In order to accomplish these things the Church is charged with the maintenance of sound doctrine and of the ordinances of Christian Worship, and with the exercise of that power of Godly admonition and discipline which Christ has committed to her for the promotion of holy living. The duties of those united in this fellowship are: to continue steadfast in the faith and practice of the gospel; to promote the peace and unity of the church; to labor for the increase of love and righteousness; and by word and deed to bring others to a knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Into this fellowship these persons who have received the sacrament of baptism and have been under instruction in the principles of the Gospel of Christ, come now seeking admission. We now propose to question them concerning their faith and purposes in so doing, that you may know that they are proper persons to be admitted into the Church.

Church Membership

(To the persons seeking admission)

Beloved in Christ, you are here seeking the great privilege of union with the church of Christ. We rejoice that through the grace of God you have been called to be His followers and that thus far you have run your race well. You are familiar with the importance of the duties of membership in the church and through it you will find opportunities for service to God and to your fellow men. It is proper therefore that you do here renew your vows, confess your faith, and declare your purpose by answering the following questions:

Do you receive Jesus Christ as your Savior, and do you confess Him as your Lord and Master?

Answer : I do.

Do you receive and profess the Christian Faith as contained in the Holy Scriptures?

Answer : I do.

Will you be loyal to the El Dorado County Federated Church, and uphold it by your prayer, your presence, your gifts and your service?

Answer : I will.

Prayer.

Almighty God, our Father in Heaven, we thank Thee that in Thy providence Thou hast called these followers of Thine into Thy fellowship. May they be graciously inclined to Thy service. May they grow in the knowledge and stature of our great Leader. May Thy Spirit be their guide and Thy presence their strength that they may faithfully advance with us the welfare of Thy kingdom

Uniting for Larger Service

on earth and finally enter into Thy kingdom above, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Methodist Minister to those uniting with that church)

By the authority committed unto me as a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, I welcome you into its fellowship praying that we may be a blessing to you and that your membership may be a blessing to your fellow Christians.

(Presbyterian Minister)

Since by uniting with the Methodist Church in this place you also become members of the El Dorado County Federated Church, I welcome you into that larger fellowship with the earnest prayer that we may all be one in Christ.

(Persons uniting with the Presbyterian Church will be welcomed first by the Presbyterian minister into the Presbyterian membership and then by the Methodist minister into the Federated Church.)

It should be noted that this order of reception was worked out for a church employing two ministers, one from each of the federating denominations.

At the conclusion of the service of reception the pastor or pastors officiating should charge the congregation with the responsibility of greeting each new member in friendly welcome. This is a valuable custom in any church but it is particularly important in a Federated Church where every effort should be made to promote Christian unity. The hearty welcome of a new Methodist member by a Presbyterian member and vice versa does much to break

Church Membership

down barriers between the membership groups and to promote the true spirit of cooperation. As in any church, the reception of members should be conducted with a becoming dignity and in a spirit of reverence. Every effort should be made to make the service beautiful as well as impressive.

VII

SELECTION OF PASTORS

ONE of the most critical tasks in a Federated Church is the selection of pastors. Upon these men who lead the newly formed union and preach the word to its congregation will depend much of its success. Let us consider first what kind of a man should be called to the pastorate of this type of church.

Above all things, he should be one who favors federation when the needs of the community require it. A salesman who does not believe in the product he is trying to sell cannot be thoroughly successful in his occupation. He is bound to be half hearted in his work. No more can successful leadership in a Federated Church run counter to conviction. If the pastor is to enthuse his people in the cause and program of such a church he must surely believe in it so that he can work consecratedly and whole heartedly for its progress.

He should not be denominationaly-minded. His conception of the Kingdom of God should not be synonymous with the final supremacy of his own denomination. Denominational work or propaganda for the sake of the denomination alone is naught but "sounding brass and a clangling cymbal," and it will spell the ruin of any Federated Church. Any denominational appeal must be made without discrimination, and with all possible fairness and

Selection of Pastors

charity. If it does not promote the united cause and that of Christ's program in the large it will be a divisive move and if persisted in will cause a split in the church.

For instance, it is a healthful thing for any church to have some missionary interest outside of its own parish. The natural missionary interest in a Federated Church is that of the denominations united in it. If the work of these boards is presented impartially, it is of real profit in giving the people of the church a world wide vision of the Christian task. If, however, a pastor whose horizons coincide with denominational bounds should lay undue stress on the missionary needs of his particular denomination, to the exclusion or disparagement of the other denomination involved, a feeling of unfairness would surely arise and trouble would follow. The pastor of a Federated Church must therefore be a man that will sacrifice personal tastes, likes and dislikes, creeds, artificial church divisions and all other man made devices for the one essential cause of the progress of the Kingdom of God. He may revere the Westminster Confession of Faith. He may dearly love the discipline and doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or of some other church, but if he would succeed in a Federated Church he must sacrifice his love for these at times in order that the love of Christ may be made incarnate in the union of two groups of His followers for the good of a community.

The pastor of a Federated Church must be tolerant. He must realize that the Father created the human mind in such a manner that we cannot all see the truth in the same way. The pastor must have his own convictions

Uniting for Larger Service

but he must at the same time have a profound respect for the faith of others. He must love his Methodist parishioners who are going to heaven by their own free will choice as much as he loves his Presbyterian flock who are going there without question because they are pre-destined so to do. Nothing is in poorer taste for any minister, and especially for one promoting the unity of the body of Christ in a Federated Church, than to cast disparaging reflections at or refuse to tolerate any other human faith. This holds regardless of whether the disparaged faith be present within the church he serves or not.

Finally, the pastor of such a church should have the characteristics of a good pastor anywhere. He must have ability to organize his work and that of the church. He should be a good administrator. He ought to have the qualities of friendliness, kindness and a pleasing personality which will make him a "good shepherd" of the sheep. He must be a man of the Spirit, a student of the Bible and other religious literature, and a man experienced in prayer. Qualities of a good religious educator and young peoples worker are invaluable especially where the church has no religious education director. These and other qualities of a good minister should be sought in selecting a pastor for a Federated Church.

Where a Presbyterian or Congregational type of church is involved in a federation and a pastor is to be sought from that denomination, the congregation will be able to exercise its discretion very fully in securing him. The procedure, as has already been stated should coincide with the denominational plan. In these types of churches it is

Selection of Pastors

common for a committee on pastoral candidates to be appointed to feel out the will of the people concerning the type of man desired and then to get in touch with available ministers who apparently have the proper qualifications. The candidates for the pulpit may be secured from various sources. In the Presbyterian Church, the Vacancy and Supply Committees of the Presbyteries and of General Assembly have constant communications from ministers desiring a change. Recommendations of various ministers by their friends will come to the church unsolicited. Presbyterial and Synodical Executives and other denominational officials who through their positions have a wide acquaintance among the ministry, frequently are able to point out such men as the church desires. If the church is receiving aid from the Home Missions Boards, it is only due courtesy to have the cooperation of the denominational executives in the selection of candidates.

When the committee settles its choice upon a possible man for the pulpit, if the candidate is then in a pastorate, it is an excellent practice for representatives of the committee to visit his present charge without disclosing their mission and see him in action. They are more apt to see a true example of his ability under these circumstances. When a man preaches in a strange pulpit as a candidate, the consciousness of his candidacy distorts his work unless he be a man of unusual poise. The result is that when candidating he is seldom at his best. Visiting a prospective pastor in his settled charge avoids a misconception of his qualities and ability.

If the committee, after its visit, is well impressed it

Uniting for Larger Service

reports favorably to the congregation concerning the minister whom it has heard. If not it seeks another candidate. If a favorable report is made by the committee, the congregation may either call the candidate on the strength of the committee's recommendation or may wish to hear him in their own pulpit. If the congregation after as much investigation as it deems necessary then votes to call the man, the call is issued according to the custom of the denomination involved. If the candidate expresses his willingness to accept, the call is then prosecuted before Presbytery or the governing body which has jurisdiction over such matters, where that is necessary to secure the approval of the denominational authorities. When all necessary concurrence has been secured the new pastor should be regularly installed and welcomed after the approved manner of the denomination.

In a denomination such as the Methodist Church where appointments are made by the Bishops after conference with the District Superintendents, the local church has less opportunity to express itself in the choice of a new pastor. When the pastor of a Federated Church is to be chosen from such a denomination, it is wise for the church through its Board of Control, to seek the co-operation of the District Superintendent and Bishop and request that they appoint a man of proper qualifications. These officials are usually very sympathetic and highly reasonable in such matters and usually will make every effort to have their appointment coincide with the will and needs of the Federated Church. It is a good thing for representatives of the church to visit the officials in person so that they may be adequately informed of the

Selection of Pastors

church's needs and desires. Once appointed, the new minister should be received heartily after the custom of his denomination. He should be welcomed socially as well as ecclesiastically by his new congregation and given their full support.

In order that this may be a whole hearted welcome and support, it is well for all pastors to have the approval of all groups within the church so far as that is possible in the process of calling them. In cases where the pastor is called by a vote of the congregation, this approval of all can be secured without great difficulty. In case of appointed pastors the congregation may have no way of knowing the appointee until after he has been regularly appointed to the charge. In this case it is important that the desires of every group in the church be made known to the appointing authorities so that their appointment may be an intelligent one. It must be kept in mind by all that the new pastor is to be a pastor not only for his denominational group but for the entire church.

Where there is only one pastor in a Federated Church he should be chosen in rotation or alternately from the different denominations involved. This lends a fairness to the situation which will be appreciated by all and encourages the support of all groups within the church. It offers a healthy variety of pastoral leadership from time to time. The pastor in turn, with this understanding, gives himself unstintingly to the service of everyone touched by the church without regard for denominational preference. Rather than have a set period for a pastor's service with the idea of producing a parity of denominational leadership, the experience of most federated

Uniting for Larger Service

churches seems to favor an indefinite pastoral contract. Each pastor should be permitted to remain as long as the congregation is progressive and happy under his leadership. A happy relationship of pastor and people transcends any necessity for equality in the denominational pastorates.

In Federated Churches which are large enough to require two or more pastors, or where a larger parish type of work makes such plurality of leadership necessary, the question naturally arises as to the authority of each pastor. Shall they be equal in authority, or shall there be a pastor and an assistant pastor, or a pastor and an associate pastor?

It would rarely if ever be advisable in a Federated Church where pastors of two or more denominations are ministering together for one to be designated as the pastor and the others as the assistant pastors. In ordinary practice, an assistant pastor is very much subordinate to the pastor and such an arrangement suggests disparity of denominational relationship, whereas in Federated Churches every possible evidence of equality should be cultivated.

Many people reason, on the other hand, that every organization needs a head. There must be some leader upon whom devolves the principal responsibility for the general direction of the work. Plurality of leadership could otherwise develop into cross purposes of action and divisive courses. If such is the judgment of the Federated Church, a far better arrangement than that referred to in the preceding paragraph is the one used in the Federated Church at Placerville, California. Here there are two pastors, one of whom is designated as

Selection of Pastors

the Senior Pastor and the other as the Associate Pastor. They are thus thought of as being practically equal in rank. A near analogy to this situation is that of the ordinary committee. The members of the committee are equal in rank, each has a vote, but one must be chairman. The Senior Pastor thus corresponds to the chairman of a committee and the Associate Pastor to a committee member. The terms associate pastor and assistant pastor connote entirely different meanings and if one pastor is to be in any way subordinate to the other it is far better to call the man of lower rank the Associate Pastor. This term implies equality insofar as it can be given under the circumstances.

In the Placerville church the Board of Control has power to appoint the Senior Pastor. On first thought it might appear that the designation should be made by the entire congregation rather than by the smaller group. This, however, might give an undue advantage to the group having the larger membership, whereas representation on the Board of Control is equal for each group and includes a member at large who would cast the deciding vote in case of a "deadlock." Consequently the Board of Control is more sure of coming to an impartial decision in the matter.

In ordinary practice the Senior Pastorship should alternate or rotate between the denominations as the changes in pastors come. Except under extraordinary conditions, the pastor who has served the field longest should be the Senior Pastor. To illustrate, let us suppose that a Presbyterian and a Methodist Church are united in the federation. The Presbyterian pastor, having been longest in

Uniting for Larger Service

service, is the Senior Pastor. He is called elsewhere and resigns. Then, ordinarily, the Methodist Pastor should become Senior Pastor and the new Presbyterian man would be the Associate Pastor. In most cases the man who has been with the church longest is most familiar with the field and its work, and is better qualified to give direction than the new man would be.

It is always possible, though, that the pastor who in usual practice should succeed to the position of the Senior Pastor may not be qualified for that position. It is also possible that a Senior Pastor, once appointed might prove to be unworthy or incapable of the position. In any such case a provision giving the Board of Control power to designate the Senior Pastor may be most valuable. Emergencies might arise at most any time wherein its use might be wise. To avoid the necessity of ever having to use it for such reasons as those just mentioned, though, the church should endeavor in securing pastors, to choose only the type of minister who would be capable of the Senior Pastor's duties. But, of course, either where ministers are appointed by a Bishop or called by a vote of the congregation it is possible that mistakes in judgment may be made. It is for the correction of these errors of judgment that this power in the hands of the Board of Control is advisable. Another reason for its use is that in the beginning of the Federated Church one or the other of the pastors must be designated as the leader. In such a case it is usual that the more experienced man or the one longest in the field will be given the pre-eminence.

The writer has served happily for six years as one of

Selection of Pastors

two pastors in a Federated Church. In this church one pastor is designated as the Senior Pastor and the other as the Associate Pastor. With this arrangement, the church has been operated successfully and happily for more than seven years. At the time of writing there seems to be no reason why such a relation could not continue indefinitely, so that the practicability of such a plan can be considered as demonstrated.

The third possibility of plural pastoral leadership has not yet been demonstrated so far as the author knows. Is it possible for a Federated Church under the leadership of two co-pastors to succeed? Where the pastors have equal authority they would necessarily have to cooperate in harmony and in confidence with one another, each being given his definite share of activity and responsibility, but such sharing is necessary even where one pastor is designated as the Senior Pastor. In case of disputed questions of opinion between the pastors as to policies and procedure, the Board of Control would serve as the arbiter to determine which plan of policy should be adopted. It is to be hoped that some day a Federated Church will experiment with a co-pastor situation.*

The co-pastor arrangement would have some distinct advantages if it proves practical. It would place both pastors on the same footing. The denominational groups would feel more on an equality since the pastor of each would be a pastor in full standing and in no way subordinate to the other. It would give the impression of equality to the community at large. Thus it would not be so easy

* Since the manuscript was completed the El Dorado County Federated Church, Placerville, Calif., has begun such an experiment.

Uniting for Larger Service

for people to refer to the Federated Church as "the Presbyterian Church" because the Presbyterian Minister happens to be the Senior Pastor. This has actually been done to the detriment of a Federated Church in a certain community known to the writer. Under this plan the salaries of the pastors would probably be equal, thus preserving a fairness in the application of funds to denominational ends. An equal distribution of work among the pastors would likewise be entailed. If the pastors worked together in a Christian spirit and with frequent conferences in which all plans and ideas were shared, there is no reason why the co-pastor plan should not prove successful and practical. At least it is worth trying.

In the final analysis each church must adjust the selection of pastors and their relations with the church according to the demands of the local situation, but in general the principles of this chapter should govern in such matters.

VIII

RELATIONS BETWEEN PASTORS

THIS chapter is written concerning Federated Churches which employ two or more ministers.

The contacts which these ministers have or fail to have will determine the harmony of the church, and in a Federated Church, lack of harmony usually spells the doom of the united movement. If a team of balky mules hitched to a wagon disagree so that one decides to pull while the other insists upon nibbling grass by the roadside, the progress of the wagon is apt to be little or at least rather hectic. At a crossroads, if one should pull one way and the other should simultaneously decide to take the other road trouble is going to follow. On the other hand if a team of well trained draft animals draws the wagon along in cooperation, forward motion is assured. The Federated Church is a wagon drawn by a team which is its pastors. These men may either act as balky mules or as well trained cooperative horses. If they work at cross purposes, the union will either be wrecked or will mark time. Nor is there any room in a Federated Church for the lazy pastor who "nibbles grass on the roadside" while he should be working. Both must bear their share of the load. Both must work in co-operation if they would push forward the Kingdom of God in their community.

Uniting for Larger Service

Cooperation is primarily the result of concurrent planning. There should be agreement on certain objectives toward the achievement of which all work of the church should be aimed. These objectives can grow only out of frequent conferences between the pastors. They should come together for planning conferences at least once a month and more often when necessary. The planning conferences should cover not only the projected work of the succeeding month but that of a considerable period in advance. Outstanding events in the church year should be thought out and scheduled several months before they occur. Early arrangement for church projects avoids conflicting events, misunderstandings, and disappointments, and insures adequate preparation and advertising. For instance, the Vacation Church School should be planned and advertised far enough ahead so that adequate teachers can be secured and trained and adequate equipment prepared. It is also advisable that it be scheduled with the Sunday School Board so that a Sunday School Picnic will not be unfortunately slated for the opening day of the Vacation School. Under the latter circumstance, if the Sunday School Superintendent is a Presbyterian and the Vacation School Superintendent a Methodist, denominational feeling and the suspicion of spite work on the part of one or the other may easily arise. Advance projection of plans by the pastors will avoid any such possibility. More misunderstandings and embarrassments are caused in Federated Churches by lack of planning than by any other failure.

The pastoral conferences should result in a definite division of responsibility. It should be understood what

Relations Between Pastors

services each is to conduct, which will oversee the religious educational program, which will take care of the publicity and so on. If both pastors try to attend every meeting and assist in directing every activity the potential work of the church is cut practically in half. If, on the other hand, each pastor is made responsible for particular parts of the church program with full authority to promote and carry them out the church receives its full benefit from its plural leadership.

The usual reason for having two or more pastors is a Larger Parish. In a Larger Parish there are generally several preaching points where religious programs must be kept in operation. Each of these should have a Sunday School, a regular schedule of preaching services, such young people's and adult's organizations as seem advisable and possible, and occasional visitation in the homes by one of the pastors. The latter is particularly important in rural work for people of the open country are friendly and like a friendly pastor. If in a Larger Parish federation covering six communities each pastor agrees to be responsible for three of them, they can promote the work more efficiently in all. The work of each will be more concentrated and the result will be a greater volume of accomplishment.

The pastors should share the burden and privilege of preaching. This will be automatically cared for if the responsibility for the work in the various communities is definitely assigned. Each pastor will have a certain number of services to conduct every Sunday. This covers more ground than if there is one man who does all the preaching while the other cares for religious education

Uniting for Larger Service

exclusively. An illustration of how the responsibilities of the pastors for preaching may be divided appears in the El Dorado County Federated Church. The parish of this church includes seven communities, the largest, and the center of which is Placerville, California. The congregation at Placerville is the main stay of the church. Here a program comparable to that of the average city church is carried on, including all regular services and organizations of a well developed church. The other communities being smaller do not demand so much attention. Therefore the work is divided as follows: The Senior Pastor specializes in the morning service in Placerville while the Associate Pastor preaches there on Sunday evening. In addition, each has responsibility for three outside preaching points. The Senior Pastor is responsible for the communities reached on Sunday evening and the Associate Pastor is the executive for the program in communities where services are held in the morning. In one preaching point where afternoon services are held, the pastors share the preaching responsibility, and the religious education work is definitely under the direction of the Associate Pastor. Under this plan each pastor preaches twice or three times each Sunday and yet is not required to preach twice in the same community on the same Sunday, except when one of the pastors is away or incapacitated by illness or some similar cause. In this case the Placerville services are continued as usual to the exclusion of the others since this community furnishes the largest number of contacts. Following this method, four communities have services every Sunday and a full religious program is carried on at the center of the parish.

Relations Between Pastors

Some of the other communities are reached once each Sunday, some twice each month and some only once each month, but each now has a regularly scheduled religious program which it would not have were it not for their cooperation with the Federated Church. Only through the division of the responsibility of preaching can so large a field be covered with a satisfactory worship program.

The experience of the church we have been talking about is, that without regular worship the religious education program in the smaller places does not thrive. There are Sunday Schools in the same county, in communities not reached by the Federated Church except for occasional weddings and funerals. In almost every case where no worship services are regularly held in addition to the Sunday School program the latter are not permanent. To illustrate what has happened in this county in past years, an annual report of one of the Sunday School missionaries working under the American Sunday School Union showed that he had organized more Sunday Schools in El Dorado County than there are School Districts. The explanation of this seeming paradox is that a large number of his Sunday Schools lapsed after a short period of operation and had to be organized again. Since the organization of the Federated Church, however, the Sunday Schools in the communities where it holds worship services have been permanent. Here is another reason for both pastors to enter into the preaching program and to divide its responsibilities in the most efficient manner.

In addition to the preaching, pastoral and administrative work should be done in each community. Sunday

Uniting for Larger Service

Schools, Boy and Girl Scout organizations, Christian Endeavor and other young people's organizations should be promoted wherever expedient. The task of keeping as many separate church programs going as there are communities in the parish, is reason enough in itself for a division of pastoral oversight and administrative responsibility.

Other varied details of the program should also be divided. Advertising and publicity, finance and church business, the every member canvass, Vacation Church Schools, Schools of Missions, midweek services, all require more or less pastoral attention and do not include the whole list of things demanding the supervision of the ministers. Let each pastor assume his share of these duties according to his talents, and let him not interfere with the work of the other man unless invited to do so. Such individual responsibility for various parts of the program makes it possible for each minister to use his initiative in promoting those matters under his charge, knowing that while he tends to his own work he is not overlapping on or conflicting with the work of his colleague. Thus, conferences over minor details of the work are avoided and each pastor can work less hampered and more efficiently.

There must always be a sharing of plans affecting major issues, however. When the pastors hold their monthly conferences they should share their projected programs with each other to make sure that they are fair to each denominational group and in line with the united program. Furthermore, each pastor through his different experience and training may have suggestions and ideas

Relations Between Pastors

which will be helpful to the other. This sharing of ideas is a wholesome thing which will enrich the work and keep the church out of the proverbial rut. Mutual discussion of plans will help to develop them and help to keep the programs mapped out by each pastor from cross purposes and conflicts.

It seems unnecessary to say that in the relationships of pastors working in the same Federated Church there should be absolute fairness ; but even Christian leaders are human and need timely warnings. Mistakes are made by the wisest of men, and selfishness is known even in the hearts of the clergy. Too much care cannot be taken by the ministers to be absolutely honest and upright in their labors together. Each must bear his share of the load. The success of the church is the success of both pastors, therefore each must do his work and do it thoroughly.

If special remuneration comes to one at the expense of the other it should be shared. For instance, in one Federated Church where there are frequent Sunday afternoon funerals, and where there is a regular Sunday afternoon church service, the pastor who conducts the funeral, if he receives a fee for it, divides the fee with his colleague who was required to conduct the church service without remuneration other than his regular salary. Such little courtesies help to preserve good feelings.

No finer motto could be adopted for mutual relationship by associated pastors of a Federated Church than the words from Romans 12:10, "in honor preferring one another." Let each pastor give his colleague the preference, delighting to honor the good qualities of the other. If both pastors happen to be present in the same meeting

Uniting for Larger Service

or service, let the pastor in charge invite his fellow worker to take some part in the event thereby recognizing his position and presence. When a member of the church has died and one of the pastors is designated by the relatives to officiate at the funeral, if there be no objection from the family, the officiating minister may invite his colleague who was also pastor of the deceased to assist. If both are present in a meeting of the Presbytery or Annual Conference, it is a courteous thing for the one who is a member of the body to introduce the other. By giving each other the place of honor a further spirit of good will is engendered through the entire congregation and the pastors are much happier together.

Many divorces of married couples occur because the husband and wife refuse to learn the principle of "give and take." Slights and minor wrongs between the contracting parties are not always deliberate and willful, being many times the products of a human nature not yet made perfect. Yet when allowed to grow and accumulate, unforgiven, they cause a train of circumstances finally resulting in separation. The same process can take place between two pastors in a Federated Church, if they do not make a practice of forgiving and forgetting each other's mistakes. No two ministers can agree perfectly and out of little disagreements troubles arise unless each makes a practice of sacrificing his pride occasionally for the sake of the other. Everyone makes mistakes and has such troubles. Ministers are no exception to the rule, therefore, happy are those associated pastors who keep no record of each other's mistakes.

Although it may be hard at times to forget the difficul-

Relations Between Pastors

ties which arise, it should be a strict rule of the pastors not to let troubles grow. "Nip them in the bud" and they vanish and seldom take root again. A little word of explanation, of apology or of forgiveness usually puts an end to minor difficulties which may grow into major rifts. Good pastors check their personal troubles for the sake of the church. They realize that their task in the ministry is not to secure perfect peace and comfort for themselves but to be "good soldiers" even to the extent of enduring hardship and rebuffs, sacrifice and persecution in order that the Master may be glorified and the world made new through Him.

When Disraeli was rising in power, Thomas Carlyle who was opposed to him politically, asked the question in one of his writings how much longer John Bull would permit such an absurd monkey to dance on his chest. Rather than retaliate, Disraeli offered Carlyle the highest distinction within his power. If insults can be forgiven and good returned for evil in the relations of secular statesmen, how much more should pardon be granted by ministers of Christ in their mutual troubles. Can Christian statesmen afford to be less virtuous than political leaders? If they teach the principles, "Love your enemies," "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord," and "overcome evil with good," they cannot consistently nurse personal grievances or retain resentment over differences which arise between them. If the ministers of a Federated Church are worthy leaders there can be no room in their hearts for littleness which would foster the desire to "get even." Big hearts only can succeed in leading a church which believes in Christian unity.

Uniting for Larger Service

Another reason why pastors must work together in friendliness is that they are leaders of the congregation. Largely as they lead the people will follow. The writer has been conducting services in camps of the Civilian Conservation Corps as a part of the federated work of his church. At some of these camps the attendance at the services is most excellent. At others it is strikingly poor in proportion to the total enrollment of the camp. What makes the difference? Investigation reveals that where the army officers in charge of the camps encourage the men to be at the religious services the attendance is large. Where they are indifferent the attendance is poor. The men follow their leaders either into support or indifference. The same principle holds in a Federated Church. If the pastors set an example of harmonious co-labor in the true Christian spirit, the denominational groups will follow them in the same spirit and will be gradually unified in their fellowship. If the pastors forget differences and distinctions so will their people.

Pastors in a Federated Church have the great advantage of a mutual companionship in which they have much in common. They have a pastoral duty and opportunity toward one another which is not available to a single pastor in the ordinary church. Even though there may be another compatible pastor nearby, the fellowship cannot be quite the same as though both are mutually concerned in the success of a single enterprise where that which benefits the one benefits the other. It should be a privilege for co-pastors to discuss their common problems and to become acquainted with each other's viewpoints. Most college students remember with pleasure

Relations Between Pastors

the dormitory room discussions of their college days in which personal, philosophical, political, and theological problems were "thrashed out," usually with a resultant clarification of ideas if not of expanded knowledge. Similar values and enjoyments may come to associated pastors in occasional visits of fellowship.

Besides their companionship, the pastors may share their equipment. They may share books, stereopticon lanterns, slides, multigraphs, or other duplicating machines, and any other pieces of equipment which the other does not possess but which might enrich his work. All sharing enhances the value of the whole church program.

Social relationships between the pastors and their families are indispensable. Like everyone else they need recreation so that the mental and spiritual self may be preserved from dullness and drudgery. Ministers, because of their general type of work, are prone to neglect proper physical renewal when the details of church work are unusually numerous. Yet such renewal is essential to their mental health and alertness. Play is essential also to their best understanding of one another. It not only reveals traits of character but develops closer comradeship which results in closer harmony and cements lasting friendship. It is a most excellent practice therefore for the ministerial families to associate in occasional picnics, dinner parties, and other forms of recreation for themselves alone. Holidays furnish good opportunities for such fellowship because they are usually poor days for pastoral work or church activities. If Monday is set aside as a rest day by the pastors, it may prove a convenient time for this recreation.

Uniting for Larger Service

The pastors may be made or broken by their attitude toward one another, especially in the presence of the church people. They may talk each other up or down. Whenever an opportunity comes for one to praise the work of the other, especially in the hearing of the church people, he can render his fellow worker an inestimable service by helping the congregation to appreciate his efforts. In any situation where two or more pastors serve in a single church, comparisons are bound to be made. Each pastor will excel the other in some portions of the work and be "found wanting" in others. Here is an occasion for mutual support.

Sometimes as a result of some failure or omission a church member is offended by one of the pastors. Smarting under what seems to him a great injury, he may come to the other pastor with a criticism of his colleague. Here is an excellent opportunity for the consulted pastor, not only to calm a troubled soul but to say a kind word for his colleague which will restore lost confidence and bring back the former friendly feeling which the offended party had for the other pastor. When asked for opinions of each other let each pastor say nothing but good. They can mutually benefit and raise the pride of the whole church in its leaders by speaking optimistically of the commendable qualities in their co-workers.

This type of thing is good advertising. A growing church must be optimistic about its pastors. The congregation must believe in their ability and must stand behind them wholeheartedly. The fact that a church has good pastors is a point in its favor which brings it new members and strong support. A church with weak and in-

Relations Between Pastors

competent pastors challenges no one. It is a burden to those who support it only out of a sense of duty. Condemnation of a pastor's weaknesses, especially where it is heard and repeated robs the entire organization of community confidence and is the worst kind of advertising. Not only does it hurt the church but it renders harder the task of both pastors, in addition to making it harder for the offending pastor to correct his own mistakes. Conditions may, of course, arise in which a pastor's work or his character require investigation. In such cases let discussion of the matter be kept in strict confidence, and if possible be limited to a meeting of the Board of Control. As far as utterance concerning one another is concerned, if the pastors have nothing good to say of each other, let them keep silence.

No more concise summary of the principles set forth in this chapter can be found than this, "Let them be Christian." This involves fairness, honesty, helpfulness, friendliness, cooperation and mutual uplift. It involves every principle of life relationship that Jesus taught! If the pastors take Him seriously and live in His spirit they can work together for years no matter what their creed, denomination or faith. If they work together successfully, the church they lead will undoubtedly prove permanent. On the other hand, if they, being trained in Christian teaching and living are unable to demonstrate their message in action, how can they expect those of lesser Christian background to do so. But, they can be Christian if they will. They can incarnate the principle of Christian unity as it is expressed in the prayer of Christ recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John's gospel. Their great-

Uniting for Larger Service

est service to the church will be a sincere attempt to be one in objectives and cooperative activity even as Christ and the Father are one. Such good shepherds will surely be followed in unity by the sheep of the church.

IX

BUILDINGS AND PROPERTY

IN most instances of federating churches, each of the uniting bodies has a church building and possibly a manse or parsonage. There may also be accessory buildings such as a parish house, gymnasium, religious education unit or other real estate or equipment useful in church work. All of this equipment should without reservation be turned over to the federated church for use in the unified program. The control of the properties after federation is usually placed in the hands of the Board of Control by the Articles of Federation. This neutral body determines which properties shall be utilized for the work of the church and how the various properties may be used. It may be that all buildings will be required for the efficient development of the full program. If so, all are available by the agreement of federation. If only a part of them are needed there is no economy in keeping them all in use. The Board of Control must use good judgment in this matter according to the conditions of its church, keeping the best interest of the federation in mind in making their decision. In one Federated Church the combined Sunday School was too large to be housed in the church building which was chosen for worship purposes, so that the primary department which had increased to eighty members had to meet in the other church building.

Uniting for Larger Service

In another community the equipment of one of the church buildings was large enough and adequately equipped to care for the whole program. Consequently the unused building was discarded effecting a considerable saving in operating cost. Efficiency and economy should decide such matters.

Pastoral residences not used by ministers may be rented or sold and thus used to produce an income for the church. In case of the sale of unused property, it is a good plan to keep the funds therefrom in a savings account or some other form of safe investment until such time as it is needed for an emergency or for the securing of new equipment. Most of the equipment other than buildings, such as chairs, pews, tables, recreation apparatus, and playgrounds will be profitably used in the combined work and should be readily available wherever needed.

The discarding of one of the church buildings is a delicate matter and must be done very tactfully. To many who have worshiped in the building which is to be set aside, it is "the dear old Church," because of the sacred memories which cluster about it. To them it is truly a church home. It will not be easy for some of these folk to transfer their affections to the new scene of worship. One sweet spirited elderly lady in the Placerville Federated Church, who was most loyal to the united work both in the matter of contributions and attendance, testified after four years of worship in a different building that she never quite felt at home there. Despite this feeling of strangeness she did not complain and was as staunch a member of the Federated Church as she had been of her denominational church before the union. She was not

Buildings and Property

alone in her feeling. Such loyal souls whose hearts ache at having to leave the former church home should be treated with the utmost consideration. The discarded church should likewise be referred to and treated with the utmost respect.

The decision as to which church building is to be used should be made without prejudice. The controlling question in making the choice should be, which building is most adequate and best equipped for the purpose of the united work. The general condition of repair must enter in. If one building is in good repair while the other would require an expense of considerable sum of money for renovation in order to make it satisfactory, the economic thing is, obviously, to use the building which is in the best condition. If one building has an auditorium which is too small to house the ordinary congregations it would be a poor one to use for that reason. Convenience, expense of upkeep, heating, lighting and operating cost must be considered. The equipment may be a deciding factor. For instance, if one auditorium has a good pipe organ it would have an advantage over one not so equipped. Whatever building is chosen let the choice be made with the wisest and most unprejudiced judgment.

The Federated Church should be slow to destroy or sell buildings which are not needed in the beginning. An expanding work may render their use necessary, therefore it is well to wait long enough to ascertain the trend of the new movement before making any radical dispositions of property. Their disposal is often as delicate a matter as the choice of which properties shall be used so that in all events the matter should not be rushed.

Uniting for Larger Service

Who should own the properties of a Federated Church? This is an involved question. In the beginning before the people become confident that the federation can be permanently successful, there may be great hesitation, if in order to consummate the union it is necessary to incorporate the Federated Church and deed all properties to it. No doubt, some will feel that the properties should be retained by the respective denominational groups for a time, at least, in case through some unfortunate circumstance the move for union should not be permanent. If there is any strength to such feeling, insistence upon centralizing the ownership of the properties in the beginning might prevent the union. In any case there is no necessity for rushing the final disposition of the properties, and usually, the less said about them, in the beginning, the better.

The experience of a number of Federated Churches is that it is better that the title to properties be vested in the denominational corporation originally owning them until after the federation is thoroughly established. This necessitates the continuance of denominational organizations and memberships within the federated body and working in harmony therewith. In order to be able to hold property as a body, each denominational group should be incorporated as a non-profit corporation or according to the custom and discipline of the church. Each corporation should elect its trustees annually and maintain as many officers as are necessary for the transaction of corporation business. It is well for each corporation within the Federated Church to have its own by-laws in addition to its Articles of Incorporation and the Articles of Federation

Buildings and Property

for the settlement of questions over which disputes might arise. All of this corporate organization, however, must harmonize with the federated program and the actions of any corporate body within the federation should be subject to review by the Board of Control. Although this results in a multiplicity of Boards and organizations within the church, which to the superficial thinker might appear to be unnecessarily cumbersome it may be the most satisfactory way of dealing with the properties in the beginning. If there are no super-sensitive feelings over property affairs, there may be encumbrances or trusts involved which would make impossible the immediate disposition of the property or its transfer to the Federated Church.

Another advantage which the author has experienced, in a Federated Church where each denomination retained its own corporation and title to properties, is in the receiving of bequests to the church. In the early days of the federation, two friends of the church passed away. Each left a legacy of money to be paid to The First Presbyterian Church of Placerville. The Federated Church, being known under another name, could not have received the gift without some litigation if at all. However, the corporation of The First Presbyterian Church of Placerville was still in existence, which fact made it possible for the church to receive these two legacies totaling more than \$1000 without question. Without the existence of the corporation to which the bequest was made the question might have been raised as to whether the donor's intention would be carried out by a payment of the legacies to a Federated Church.

Uniting for Larger Service

After the federation is established, any legacies would be more apt to be made in the name of the Federated Church, but in the beginning, considerable loss could be sustained through loss of legacies if the original corporations passed out of existence.

In preparation for the day when further unity in the new Federated Church may be demonstrated by the deeding of all properties to the Federated Church, and in preparation for the sale or purchase of properties when that seems wise, it should be ascertained whether there are any clouds or encumbrances on the title thereto. If there are any they should be cleared away as much as possible. This may avoid extensive legal processes and litigation at the time of sale, and possibly the loss of a sale. One Federated Church lost a profitable opportunity to sell an unused piece of property because it could not prove a clear title. Anything which might prove an obstacle either to the sale or purchase of properties or to the transaction of any other business by the corporation should be removed. For instance there should be evidence that the denominational group is regularly incorporated. Otherwise it will have difficulty in proving a right to hold property.

Many churches, particularly in the western states, are unincorporated either because they were never incorporated or because their term of incorporation has run. In California until recently, a corporation ceased to exist at the end of fifty years unless its Articles of Incorporation were renewed. If any church has been incorporated under such a statute, its articles of incorporation must be renewed, when the time of limitation expires, otherwise the corporation will lapse. The corporation after the lapse might

Buildings and Property

be considered as a de facto corporation but this may give rise to legal difficulties. The cost of incorporating a non-profit corporation is so small that it is not worth while to take chances on imperfect legal standing. Every church body whether involved in a federation or not should be absolutely sure of its corporate standing. In cases where the property is held in the name of trustees, or by individuals in trust for the church, because there has never been an incorporation of the latter, steps should be taken to incorporate. Church property should belong legally to the entire membership and only a corporate organization can make this possible in the truest sense.

Another possibility is the loss of all evidence of incorporation. The Placerville Presbyterian Church, a branch of the El Dorado County Federated Church, desired to purchase a piece of property and the question of its incorporation was raised. There were statements in the records showing that the church had been incorporated in 1861. However, no copies of the articles of incorporation could be found either in the church files or the records of the County Clerk or of the Secretary of State, at the State Capitol. The absence in the latter place was explained by the fact that the statutes in force in 1861 did not require the filing of Articles of Incorporation with the Secretary of State. Filing with the County Clerk was then sufficient. The absence of the record in the County Clerk's office was reasonably explained by the destruction of the Court House by fire in 1910, at which time a large number of important documents were lost. Since there was not sufficient knowledge of the original Articles of Incorporation to make possible a legal reproduction of

Uniting for Larger Service

them it was deemed advisable to re-incorporate the church. This was done in 1930 and all property titles were cleared at the same time. There has consequently been no subsequent trouble in business dealings concerning church property either real or personal. It seems unnecessary to state that the advice of a competent lawyer should be secured in investigating and dealing with all such matters.

What about repairs and upkeep? As already suggested, efficiency dictates that only such properties as are needed in the work should be kept up. Money spent on property not in use except as required for necessary protection is wasted as far as the federated program is concerned. Repairs should be promptly made on all properties in use by the church and should be paid for out of the central treasury which pays the operating expenses of the church. Insurance, fuel, taxes, power and lighting, and assessments on all properties of the church should be borne by the entire church, since these are all incidental either to ownership or operation of the equipment and buildings. The entire church benefits through such expenditure.

If it is in line with the federated program, permission may be given by the Board of Control to either of the denominational groups to add to its property or repair the same by raising its own funds. This may usually be permitted providing the campaigns for funds or other contributions do not in any way interfere with the Federated program. Need for such an action might arise as follows. In a certain Federated Church where there were two pastors, one of the uniting churches owned a parsonage but the other did not. In order to give the man without a

Buildings and Property

parsonage an adequate salary, the church paid him in addition to what he would normally receive an allowance for house rent. After about three years of this procedure, it was decided that the church should have a manse, instead of paying this yearly amount in rentals. Then the denominational group not having a pastor's residence conceived the idea of increasing its contribution to the Federated Church by securing a suitable property for the purpose. This denominational group, with the consent of the Board of Control, took upon itself the responsibility of raising the funds for this purpose and purchased a house and lot valued at \$4500. In so doing they made an important contribution to the federation as a whole and more nearly equalized their contribution of equipment with that of the other denomination. Likewise if either denomination has a debt upon its property and the other has not, the debt should be borne and retired by the group which incurred it before the federation began. Such matters as these can be adjusted in accordance with the needs of the particular federation.

The Board of Control should be the mediator in all disputes concerning property matters and should be asked for its approval on all plans for repairs, alterations or additions to the properties. Once the Board of Control has given its approval to the plans for change, it may and usually will delegate the details of carrying them out to the Board of Trustees of the Corporation owning the building to be altered. Such delegation of responsibility should include as far as possible all business details of the operation.

The raising of funds should be done tactfully, at an

Uniting for Larger Service

opportune time, and in such a way that it will not interfere with the financing of the religious program of the united church. For instance, an appeal for funds for a denominational object should not be made too near the time of the every member canvass for the central budget of the Federated Church. The latter should always have the right of way because the cause of union is supreme in federation. Unless other ends are secondary a lasting union is impossible.

In dealing with denominational properties each group should be very careful to avoid misunderstanding. Neither denomination should interfere with the business of the other unless the cause of federation is involved. In a federation in California, after three years of successful work, the question was raised at the annual meetings of the two denominational groups within the church, whether the time had come to incorporate the Federated Church and transfer all properties to it. One denominational group voted almost unanimously to enter into such a consolidation if the other group was willing to do likewise. It happened that at that particular time negotiations were under way for the sale of the church building belonging to the above mentioned denominational group, which was not being used by the federation. The other denominational group considered this fact and declined to merge properties at that particular time because they were reluctant to place themselves in the position of having to vote on the sale of a building which had been the church home of some of its owners for more than sixty-six years. They felt that the present owners should deal with that problem themselves in such a way that there could be

Buildings and Property

no suspicion of interference or meddling by the members of the other denomination. Farsightedness and tact in these matters can save trouble and hurt feelings.

After the federation becomes thoroughly settled, however, in order to centralize the business of the church it may be thought wise to consolidate the church into a single corporation, deeding all properties thereto. This would involve, first of all, the incorporation of the Federated Church which should be done under professional legal guidance and in accordance with the statutes. This gives the church its business rights and there should be included in the Articles of Incorporation the grant by the state of permission to enter into any business or legal relationship which might at any time be desirable. The corporation will have no rights and privileges other than those granted by its charter or Articles of Incorporation.

Once the legal rights of the church are established the next step is for the denominational groups to grant and convey to the Federated Church all of their properties by sufficient deeds and bills of sale. In order to do this each corporation owning property within the Federated Church should meet and consent to the sale of their properties to the united body. Such consent, being for the sale of all of the properties of the corporation, must be given at a legal meeting thereof, and by such majority of votes as is prescribed by the statutes. Usually a two-thirds vote is required. Reversion or restrictive clauses in wills or deeds by which the properties are granted to the owners sometimes make the transfer difficult or virtually impossible. For guidance in all such matters a

Uniting for Larger Service

competent attorney should be engaged to superintend the operations.

In addition to securing the consent of the local organizations to the transfer, the consent of the Presbytery, Conference, or governing bodies having jurisdiction from above should be made certain. Without their consent a valid transfer may be impossible. All of these things having been done, there is usually no impediment to centering all business of the church in a single corporation of the united body.

When this is accomplished only one Board of Trustees for the whole institution is necessary. The Federated Church now unqualifiedly assumes responsibility for the upkeep and ownership of all equipment, and for all business relating to the church in any way. Denominational memberships may still be continued if it seems desirable but would not have to continue for the sake of property. The denominational corporations may, however, be dissolved and thus lessen the number of organizations required within the church.

The Federated Church at Orland, California, has thus consolidated its property. The Board of Trustees of this church is elected by the church Council, as its Board of Control is called, from its own membership. These trustees act as the board of directors of the church corporation. They have supervision of all church property under the control of the church. They make and execute all contracts, submit statements of proposed business and expenditures to the Council for its approval. In business affairs they are the executive committee of the church. The local properties have been merged into a common

Buildings and Property

property belonging to and controlled by the Federated Church of Orland, a Corporation.

The absolute union of the church both in membership and property is the ideal, but it must not be hurried. It must be remembered that there are no set rules for dealing with the property. Every church is different as well as every community, therefore the thing which seems wise and expedient under the circumstances is the thing to be done. As a rule it is well to let moves concerning the property originate from within the membership, otherwise it may be suspected that the pastor is "trying to put something over." The suggestions of this chapter are not to be interpreted as maxims inviolable. They are rather meant as guides to possible solutions of the problems of property. Every suggestion given has been tried successfully in a Federated Church. They are not the only ideas that will work. Each new Federated Church will add to our knowledge and wisdom in these matters.

X

A FIFTY-FIFTY BASIS

CLOSELY akin to the problem of properties is the problem of financing the church. In this connection there are two supreme guiding principles,—absolute honesty and absolute fairness. The first is requisite in any kind of a church. Treasurers and church boards cannot be too careful in the keeping of accounts, and applying moneys given in accordance with the intention of the donors. The church should always lead in matters of idealism and morality, and if its finances are handled loosely or dishonestly, the community is bound to lose confidence in its leadership. Therefore, in addition to strict accounting by the treasurer it is important for the protection of all concerned that the church financial record should be inspected and audited at least once a year by a competent committee. A report of correctness and approval by an auditing committee prevents the arising of suspicion or scandalous gossip concerning the correctness of the accounts or the integrity of the treasurer. While this is important in any church, it is particularly important in a Federated Church where rumors of malfeasance may be quickly spread by disgruntled people who oppose the federation.

In a Federated Church fairness is as important as honesty. There must be no discrimination against or in favor

A Fifty-Fifty Basis

of any denominational group joined in the union. The groups should share in the work on a "fifty-fifty" basis, especially in the application of funds to missionary or denominational work outside the local parish. For instance, in a federation of two denominations, if the Sunday School receives a special offering for Home Missions totaling \$15 then \$7.50 should be sent to the Home Missions Board of each denomination embraced in the union.

With these principles in mind let us turn to the task of providing for the current expenses of the church. This is the church's first financial task, and the one which, in a Federated Church, usually is the least problematical of the financial tasks. Most of the current obligations are incurred in work for the Federated Church as a whole. Pastors work not for denominational purposes but for the entire church. So does the janitor or sexton. The entire congregation profits by the upkeep and use of the church building. Consequently, such items are automatically divided by being applied to joint purposes and mutual needs. Included in the current expense budget are usually found such items as pastors' salaries, janitor's salary, treasurer's salary if any, insurance on buildings and furniture, taxes on real estate not used for worship where such property is taxable, fuel, electricity for power and lighting, water, repairs and additions to equipment. These expenses should be provided for out of one central treasury. The amounts of salaries, what insurance policies it is advisable to have written for the protection of buildings, employer's liability, etc., and similar expenditures which do not come in the form of assessments as do taxes

Uniting for Larger Service

are usually determined by the Board of Control. Without the authorization of this body, the treasurer should not pay any bills or expend any moneys. Once these items are fixed, however, the Board of Control usually by a motion regularly carried gives the treasurer authority to make any expenditures within the adopted budget. When this is done it is not necessary for the treasurer to refer every individual item to the Board for approval.

The salaries of the pastors are usually the largest items of the annual budget. Where a Federated Church has only one pastor no problem of division arises. The single pastor serves the entire church with impartiality. However, in a church where there are two or more pastors, the question of how much each shall receive is more involved. Even in this case, each pastor serves the entire church, so from the standpoint of service received the expenditure of money for the salaries is equally divided. Each denominational group receives a benefit from each pastor's work. To that extent there is an equal division no matter what may be the salaries of the respective men.

Sometimes where one pastor is designated as the Senior Pastor, with duties which demand a greater ability or more exacting work and leadership, it may seem wise for him to receive a larger salary than the other pastor or pastors. This depends upon the individual situation. Some may feel that each pastor should receive the same salary and thus bring about an equal application of funds in this way. This is the proper arrangement without doubt in a church where the pastors are co-pastors, or where their work is practically equal. Nevertheless, where

A Fifty-Fifty Basis

a difference in activity and responsibility exists it can be seen that this might not be a just arrangement.

On the basis of his experience in a two-pastor Federated Church, the author inclines to the opinion that each pastor should be paid in proportion to his duties, with due consideration of the expense he incurs in carrying out his work. If one pastor is required to drive his automobile 500 miles a month to do the work of the church while the other minister to do his share must drive 1000 miles a month, consideration should be made of this inequality in determining how much each shall receive. This applies, of course, where no fund is allowed for traveling. The Board of Control, if well chosen, can usually be trusted to regulate the matter of salaries with fairness, in consideration of the duties and necessary expense of each worker and the particular conditions of the parish.

Inasmuch as the Federated Church maintains an organic connection with the denominations of the uniting churches through the regular channels, certain assessments and obligations arise for the maintenance of denominational government and supervision. Take, for instance, the per capita tax of the Presbyterian Church. This is a variable levy of approximately twenty-five cents per member, per annum. Each church pays this amount for the operating expense of the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. In a Federated Church this levy is made only on the basis of its Presbyterian membership. Likewise, the Methodist Episcopal Church levies an assessment of so much per month or per year for the support of the District Superintendent and the Bishop. These assess-

Uniting for Larger Service

ments are similarly based only upon the Methodist membership within the church.

In some denominations, a system of pensions for ministers has been instituted. The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. has a Board of Pensions which operates on an insurance basis. In order to provide an actual basis for a minister's pension, when he comes to the age of retirement, in addition to what the minister pays each month, the local church employing a Presbyterian minister usually obligates itself to pay to the Board an amount equal to seven and one half per cent of his salary. This obligation is usually met monthly. The Methodist Episcopal Church has a similar assessment or obligation known as the Conference Claimant's fund which supports retired ministers in their declining years. These illustrate the "overhead" expenses which may be imposed upon Federated Churches. Practically every denomination imposes some such demands upon its local churches for denominational ends, so that no matter what may be the faiths embraced in the union the problem of "overhead expense" will be a vital one. Yet, if the Federated Church accepts the advantages of organic denominational connection, it should pay its share for the supervision it receives.

These expenses which we have termed "overhead" frequently raise a problem of inequality. It usually happens that the assessments of one denomination are greater than those of another. This calls for an equalization of some kind. In one Federated Church equalization was made as follows: There were two denominations involved. After totaling the overhead demands of each it was found that the assessments of denomination number one were

A Fifty-Fifty Basis

\$120 less than those of denomination number two. To equalize the payment of moneys to the two denominations, the Board of Control then ordered that \$10 per month or \$120 per year be sent to the Missionary Boards of denomination number two. The church was well satisfied with this equalization, and all suspicion of inequality in denominational expenditure was prevented by making the facts of the arrangement public.

The next matter we shall deal with is benevolences. A Federated Church, just as any other church, must give to other causes than its own if it would have a healthy existence and cultivate aright the Christian character of its people. Further, a Federated Church should support the missionary boards of its own denominations first of all. These denominations fostered the uniting churches in the beginning. Frequently they have been benefactors of these boards before their union, and may continue to be after the federation takes place. Since in this type of union the churches are not separate from the denominations they should not shirk their share in the denominational missionary task throughout the world. It is with such obligations as these in mind that the Federated Church should expend the funds given through it for missionary purposes.

There will be as many groups of missionary boards to support as there are denominations embraced in the federation. For that reason it may be found wise to place in the hands of each denominational group within the church the task of raising its own quota or contribution for missions. It may be found wise also to have more than one Ladies Missionary Society. In the Federated

Uniting for Larger Service

Church at Placerville, California, there is a Methodist Ladies Missionary Society and a Presbyterian Ladies Missionary Society. Each accepts the responsibility for the support of the Boards of its denomination and raises contributions for designated work. These two organizations have existed simultaneously throughout the history of the federation. There has been no ill feeling between them. They hold occasional joint meetings and through their separate meetings and efforts denominational missionary objects are cared for without unfriendly rivalry or conflict. It is simply a convenient division of the missionary task, which has made for efficiency.

It is a good plan to use duplex offering envelopes in a Federated Church as well as in a denominational church. Thus, the right hand side of the envelope is the constant reminder to the contributor that the church has responsibility for the Kingdom of God beyond itself. It brings about a definite separation of gifts for benevolence from those for current expense. In a Federated Church, gifts placed in the benevolence side of the envelope are applied to missionary work either according to the denomination or the designation of the giver. Where gifts are prescribed for a certain object, it is the treasurer's duty to see that the trust thereby created is carried out according to the intention of the giver. Where no designation is made, and the giver is a member of one of the denominations, the wisest plan is to apply the contributions for benevolence to the missionary boards of the contributor's denomination. Thus, each member supports the missionary work of his own faith, and the boards of each denomination are aided in proportion to its membership.

A Fifty-Fifty Basis

within the church. Affiliated members' and non-members' contributions for benevolence, if not designated for some particular object, should be equally divided between the denominational mission boards. This not only takes care of denominational needs for a missionary outlet but it also provides a fair and impartial distribution of the gifts of those not denominationally aligned.

Some churches have found it advisable to have a separate treasurer for benevolences. This arrangement simplifies the bookkeeping and draws a further line of demarcation between missionary funds and the current expense account. It takes away the suspicion which arises often, that funds designated for missionary work are being used to bolster up a depleted church treasury which has fallen into that state due to the sloth of the finance committee. There are some treasurers on the other hand who will scrupulously keep separate accounts of the current expense and benevolence funds. When such a treasurer is in office, it may not be necessary to have a separate treasurer for missionary funds, but under ordinary conditions the policy of having two treasurers will ward off misappropriation of funds and needless criticism.

Fairness in calling the attention of the church to the work of the denominational missionary boards will be appreciated. It is not necessary to "soft pedal" missionary work in a Federated Church simply because the work is that of a particular denomination. Missionary anecdotes may be told and addresses made without playing up the denomination responsible for them. Missionary appeals can be made even in a united church of this sort without offending anybody. Any work which is advanc-

Uniting for Larger Service

ing the cause of missions is of vital interest to the church if presented for the sake of the Kingdom of God rather than some denomination. But even denominational appeals can be made if they are made impartially. Therefore, when people are urged to give to the boards of one denomination, fairness may be preserved by urging them to give also to the work of the other denomination.

Most missionary emphasis centers around special days of the church year. On these occasions it is a common practice to receive a special offering for certain missionary objects. The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. sets aside its Children's Day offering for the work of Sunday School Missions. The Methodist Episcopal Church uses the offering of that day to build up its Student Loan Fund for needy college students. What then should a Federated Church including Methodists and Presbyterians do about this seeming conflict? The answer comes out of the experience of a number of such churches. Present both causes. Both are worthy. Both are interesting. Then divide the offering equally between them. Thus Children's Day is enriched by a larger interest and all parties concerned are satisfied.

The use of missionary posters which do not play up the denomination which issues them is never objectionable. A denominational poster, bearing the denominational name can be displayed with fairness beside a poster bearing the name of the other denomination. Sometimes the denominational name can be removed without destroying the value of the poster. In that case it can be changed to suit the situation. If impartiality of the display of posters is impossible, it is better not to display them and

A Fifty-Fifty Basis

to arrange for missionary promotion in some other way.

Pastoral leadership also calls for fairness. A single pastor in a Federated Church must not give all of his time to the members of his own faith. People will be watching to see that he distributes his time throughout the entire congregation. Pastoral service can know no favorites nor be a respecter of any particular persons. This holds good also where there are two or more pastors. Neither must show favoritism either denominationally or personally. Each is a pastor to the entire congregation and must serve each membership group without prejudice. They must divide their work in some equitable manner so that each bears his fair share of the burden, but this has already been discussed in the chapter on relations between the pastors.

Responsibility for the preaching services should be as equal as possible. This not only equalizes the burden of sermon preparation for the pastors but it gives the congregation a chance to hear both ministers and gives all a sense of fairness. This was also touched upon in the chapter on pastoral relations.

In Federated Churches with more than one pastor there is usually a larger parish to be cared for. This makes necessary a program covering a number of preaching points. Each must be reached with as adequate a religious program as possible which mounts into a tremendous task. Division of responsibility for these communities, and for other parts of the church program is a great help in organizing the work and keeping a satisfactory church work going in all.

All of the facts presented in this chapter point to the

Uniting for Larger Service

conclusion that there must be equal sharing both in the burdens and beneficial results of a federated work. Where leaders and congregation alike attack their common task with a will to bear their full share, to seek no favor and ask none which is not deserved, and to be honest and fair in every plan and activity there is strong probability of a successful community effort. This means the crucifixion of all denominational selfishness. One federation in a western state failed because one of the denominational groups insisted on having perpetual control. They demanded for instance that the pastor of the church should always be chosen from their denomination, the church building of that denomination should be used exclusively, and their membership group should be empowered to elect the majority of the Board of Control. Other demands were made which were obviously so unfair that after hearing them one of the fair minded citizens of the community was heard to say, "The only thing those people forgot to ask for was that we should deed all our church property over to their denomination!" People who cannot see beyond the horizon of their denomination and who insist on being unfair or dishonest cannot expect success in a federation of churches. On the other hand those who are not only willing to be honest and fair but are willing to forgive those who are a bit dishonest and unfair can succeed with a glorious work in the name of the Christ in communities where competitive religious programs would gradually die.

XI

THE FEDERATED CHURCH AND ITS DENOMINATIONS

THERE are a number of advantages which come to a Federated Church by affiliation with the denominations from which it springs. These have already been touched upon but should now be dealt with more fully. Let us also consider the technique of such affiliation.

In the securing of a pastor, the denominations to which the church belongs furnish an unfailing supply of competent ministers. There are some free lance preachers who are independent, who spurn membership in any denomination and who possibly because of erratic tendencies cannot be admitted to any denomination. They may prove to be suitable men, but there is a far greater probability that they will not. Frequently they do not qualify in the requisite training or character for the ministry, and consequently have been refused ordination by the established faiths or had trouble in them. Our major denominations are gradually raising the standards of admission to the ministry and by their oversight are able to vouch for the character and ability of their clergymen. Consequently when a minister with some denominational standing is called the church can feel fairly sure that it is employing a man who is qualified to preach and able to

Uniting for Larger Service

lead a church acceptably. We will have to recognize that even in the securing of a minister who does belong to a denomination we are sometimes disappointed but the danger of poor leadership is far greater in calling a "free lance." The pastoral or ministerial record of a denominational minister is always available on the books or minutes of the governing bodies. The name and work of every Presbyterian minister is recorded every year in the General Assembly Minutes. Other denominations have similar means of recording their ministers' records. Thus any church or person desiring it can be easily satisfied as to the consistency and type of a minister's prior service. In the case of an independent minister such a checkup is impossible.

The orderly method of procedure furnished by many denominations in placing pastors is also worth a good deal to a Community Church where smoothness in bringing about a desired result is especially important to preserve good feeling. Only under certain settled conditions will the denominations place a pastor in charge of a church. These conditions form the terms of a binding contract between the church and its minister. Thus the terms of the pastoral contract are thoroughly understood and uniform and there is an orderly procedure for enforcing or altering them.

To illustrate, let us quote the standing rules of one Presbytery regarding the placing of ministers.

"No congregation shall be permitted to call a Pastor, or to employ a Stated Supply, while in arrears for pecuniary support, promised by said congregation to a former pastor or supply, including arrears in pending payments

The Federated Church

to the Board of Pensions. Nor shall any congregation be recommended to the Board of National Missions for aid until what was promised in the previous application to the Board has been satisfactorily adjusted.

"All calls to pastorates should specify the following essentials: Salary, a minimum of \$1800, and manse or equivalent, and vacation of one month annually; and shall include agreement to pay $7\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the amount of the salary to the Pension Fund.

"Stated Supplies of our churches who are members of Presbytery, are authorized to act as Moderators of the Sessions of the Churches they regularly supply; and in case there are no ruling elders of the church, the stated supply is empowered to receive and dismiss members.

"No minister shall serve as stated supply of any of our churches, except federated churches, for more than six months, unless the time be extended by Presbytery on the recommendation of the committee on Vacancy and Supply, and in no case for a period of more than one year.

"Ministers of other denominations in charge of Federated Churches under supervision of Presbytery, automatically become corresponding members of Presbytery upon their appearance upon the floor of Presbytery."

Under such definite rules as these which are provided by every denomination and which must be complied with before a pastorate may be established or broken off, ministers of good standing and ability are usually more willing to serve than in an independent church.

Note the recognition of Federated Churches in these rules. Not only are certain exceptions made in order to encourage these united efforts but pastors of other

Uniting for Larger Service

denominations serving Federated Churches in which Presbyterian groups are affiliated are given corresponding membership in Presbytery whenever they attend. The latter provision should be a part of the standing rules of every denominational governing body which has jurisdiction over Federated Churches.

Some denominations have established, and others are establishing a system of pensions for retired ministers. In the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., this fund is now on a firm insurance basis and has the participation of practically all Presbyterian ministers. Participation in such funds is not only desirable but is actually the practice of most ministers in the denominations which have established them. The fact that a Federated Church is affiliated with a denomination makes it possible for a minister building a pension to claim credit for service therein. The rules of the Pension Boards are usually such that pensions are granted only on the basis of service to that denomination. Service in an independent community church would therefore not qualify for pension credit except through some special arrangement. This is a vital factor to a minister in accepting a call or an appointment to a Federated Church, and if the Federated Church is able to participate in the denominational pension plan through denominational affiliation he has no fear of penalizing his future pension. A Federated Church, properly managed, will cooperate in this matter and bear its share toward the retiring pension of its pastors.

In some churches of federated type, as has already been repeatedly mentioned, the Home Missions Boards are required to assist. If the support from the local field is

The Federated Church

inadequate even after the union has been formed, the Federated Church will have another reason to be thankful for its denominational connection. It may then secure the needed aid from its own denominational agencies. In addition to aid in financing the current program, a number of Federated Churches have been assisted by denominational boards in financing the construction of new buildings such as churches, religious education units, and manses.

We have been dealing thus far with the advantages the Federated Church may receive from its denominational affiliation. Let us now consider what service it may render through such a relationship. A pool of water with no outlet soon becomes stagnant. So does a church which never ministers to any cause outside itself. We cannot keep our Christianity pure and vital without sharing it. This is just as true of the field aided by missionary funds as of the self-supporting church. The missionary church must give as well as receive, to have a wholesome existence. Our hearts go with our gifts and if our gifts are all showered upon our narrow horizons, then we forget a world need and become self-centered. If we truly love God, writes John, we must love our neighbor also. Even a Federated Church must express that love in benevolent giving.

This being the case the church needs a dependable outlet for its missionary giving. A study of the various agencies doing missionary work will convince one very quickly that there are no more dependable and efficient missionary boards than those organized by and responsible to our evangelical Christian denominations. Denomina-

Uniting for Larger Service

tional affiliation gives the Federated Church a natural outlet for its benevolence through these dependable boards and the church may rest assured that when these boards administer the funds, the major portion of the money contributed is spent on the field. Many of the independent benevolent agencies have entirely too high an overhead expense, but this is not commonly true of our denominational church boards. These denominational boards must report regularly to the governing church bodies, their books are audited by certified accountants, and their officers are carefully selected from the best material available. Under such strict supervision of these Boards as our major denominations offer, the Federated Church may be confident that its gifts to missions will be properly and efficiently administered.

In a certain Independent Church with no denominational connection, the pastor reports that interest in missions and benevolent work is practically nil. In answer to an inquiry as to the reason therefor, it was found that the people declined to support any denominational board because the church was to be kept strictly a Union or Undenominational church. They could not give to one board without giving to all and would not run the risk of offending any supporter by slighting the denomination of his preference. The result is that the church does no missionary work, it has no missionary interest and has become a self-centered church. Not only has benevolent giving by that church ceased but the current expense budget has been gradually lowered as the urge has come to give less and less to the benevolent objects. Generous or selfish giving to benevolent causes always reacts in

The Federated Church

direct proportion upon the spiritual and financial condition of the local church.

The cooperation of the denominational officials in the operation of a Federated Church is just as important as in organizing it. Cooperation in a federated program must include a coordination of the denominational machinery in fostering the same. It usually rests with the executive officers of the governing bodies to bring about such coordination. They can bring about quick and efficient contacts between the people and authorities involved. They are frequently called upon to recommend matters of policy regarding the fields and the intelligence and friendliness of such recommendations will depend upon their intimacy with the local situation. They often determine the amount of missionary aid a field will receive, for instance, for their recommendation in such matters is usually accepted. They cannot know the field too well. Therefore the Federated Church should welcome all visits by the Executives, District Superintendents, Bishops and other officials who find it possible to come from time to time. Sometimes they have official duties in coming as when the Methodist District Superintendent visits the church to conduct the Quarterly Conference. On such an occasion all members of the church should be cordial. He should be invited to preach and thus to bring any message which his denomination may have for the good of the united work, and surely the Methodist people should enter into the proceedings of the Quarterly Conference with a proper spirit. This principle applies to any and all visits of church officials.

Not only for purposes of oversight and cooperation is

Uniting for Larger Service

this relationship important but it may be a means of inspiration. When these men appear in the pulpit, a new voice is heard which gives the people a change of sermonic diet. Whether their preaching ability is good or bad they present a message from a different point of view and the people should therefore be glad to hear them. Their wider contacts will bring news of what other churches are accomplishing and of the church at large, in its nation wide programs which deserve the cooperation of every Federated Church. Thus they may be used to enhance the spiritual life of the church.

Presbytery meetings, Conferences, Synods, etc., must not be neglected if the Federated Church is to prosper. The church should always be represented at these gatherings as fully as possible. Where there is only one pastor, he should attend the meetings of all denominations affiliating in the union. These contacts are welcomed by the respective bodies. It has already been mentioned that some Presbyteries provide in their standing rules that all pastors of other denominations in charge of Federated Churches with Presbyterian affiliation are automatically received as corresponding members when they appear on the floor of Presbytery. A similar spirit of recognition and participation should characterize all relations between Federated Churches and the denominational governing bodies. The Methodist Conference in the same region as the Presbytery mentioned above recognizes pastors of Federated Churches of Methodist affiliation, whether they be Methodists or not, regularly appoints them to the respective charges, and prints their names in the minutes of the body.

The Federated Church

Where there are two or more pastors, one from each denomination, a very happy situation may be worked out in which each pastor represents the church in the governing bodies of his own faith. This divides the burden of travel so that each is at less expense. It also reduces the number of extra-parish meetings and duties which invariably come from this part of religious work. A further advantage is that one pastor remains on the field to be of pastoral service in case of emergency, while the other attends the official meeting.

In most of these governing bodies some arrangement is made for representation of the local church by a layman as well as by the pastor. In the Presbyterian Church an elder delegate is elected by the Session to attend Presbytery and Synod. In the Methodist Church, the Quarterly Conference elects a lay delegate to the annual Conference. Where this is possible it is just as important that the church be represented by laymen as by ministers. This opportunity should in no way be neglected for it is one of the greatest means of educating our laymen in the program and work of the church at large. It will also help them to have confidence in denominational supervision.

Reports should be regularly sent in as required. The denominational groups should report annually or whenever the report is due just as they would if not affiliated in the union. The Presbyterian session within the Federated Church should present its minutes, annually, to the Presbytery for review by them. The Methodist Pastor should likewise see that the Methodist reports are properly submitted to the Conference. Whatever other denomina-

Uniting for Larger Service

nation is involved should have its customs concerning reports similarly observed. These things all help to keep the church in good standing, a matter in which a Federated Church as well as any other church may well take pride. The governing bodies are ready to cooperate with all local churches which show a willingness to do likewise. The seal of approval has frequently been placed upon the work of Federated Churches, by electing their pastors and lay representatives to positions of authority and responsibility.

Paul said, "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers." This may well be applied to the judicatories of the Church, even by federated bodies. It will seldom be found that these governing courts are overbearing. On the contrary, their desire is, on the whole, to foster and encourage interdenominational cooperation.

XII

DOCTRINE, WORSHIP, AND THE SACRAMENTS

“**D**O you have any trouble about doctrine and belief in your Federated Church?” This question has been asked of the writer no less than a dozen times by interested parties. The answer has thus far been, “No.”

It is not to be implied from this that such troubles are not possible. They would surely be made possible, yes, even probable by an unwise presentation or stressing of denominational doctrines so as to foster the feeling that there is partiality or prejudice in the preaching of the pastor. Let the ministers of a Federated Church use ordinary common sense, tolerance and tact in the teaching and preaching of doctrine and no resentment will arise nor troubles be caused over them.

As a rule the congregation is not doctrinally minded. The layman is seldom trained in a system of theology such as the theological seminaries present to their students. Whatever of doctrine the common man knows or believes has been taught him by his pastors. The people are not usually “heresy hunters,” although occasionally there are found those who delight in correcting the theology of the minister. The layman cares little about theology. He does not want dogma. He wants a practical application

Uniting for Larger Service

of the Bible to the problems he faces every day in the office, on the farm, at home or wherever his occupation may lead him.

With these thoughts in mind, I would say first of all regarding the presentation of doctrine in a Federated Church, "Let the pastor preach his convictions." Powerful preaching cannot be achieved in any other way. The pastor to be a successful preacher must believe the great truths of the Christian faith with all his heart and soul and mind. If he does not preach his convictions he will move nobody and will be untrue to himself. As far as the layman is concerned, he prefers it that way.

A certain man who kept a saloon in the days before prohibition went to church one Sunday morning. It happened that in the sermon the pastor made strong remarks on the subject of temperance, condemning in no uncertain terms the use of alcoholic drinks as beverages. The saloon keeper walked home with a friend after the service and in the conversation which naturally ensued, the friend asked:

"What do you think of your preacher now?"

"He's the finest man I ever knew," was the startling reply.

"Well," said the friend in surprise, "didn't you hear what he said about your business?"

"Of course I heard it," came from the saloon keeper. "I wouldn't give a cent for a preacher who preached what I believe. I want him to preach what he believes."

In the long run it will be found that a congregation respects a pastor who has strength of character enough to preach his convictions without fear or favor. However,

Doctrine, Worship, Sacraments

these convictions can be presented sensibly and in so far as possible in such a way that they do not offend.

Beware of labeling doctrine in a Federated Church. If a pastor believes strongly in freedom of the will, let him preach it but let him do so without driving home the fact that it is a Methodist tenet of belief and without making it embarrassing for the Presbyterian member whose faith in predestination is a comfort and a stay. Preach doctrines with no reference to the denomination which originated them.

Be tolerant. Let the pastor realize that most matters of doctrine are debatable questions. We do not all see alike, particularly is this true of a Federated Church where the different members may come from widely varied religious backgrounds. Therefore, when preaching his convictions the pastor must never condemn or caustically criticise anyone who differs from him. Few people object to hearing things with which they do not agree but most of the human race do object to being condemned because of a difference of opinion. Doctrines firmly believed can be preached potently and yet in a spirit of love which hurts no one's feelings.

Make doctrines practical. Doctrine for doctrine's sake has no place in any Christian church. Doctrine never saved anyone except as it has helped that person to live in the Christian way. We may believe, for instance, in the essential and infinite worth of the human soul but unless that belief leads us to do something to help some unfortunate soul to a more abundant life we may as well not believe it. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these" is the standard Christ sets as the analysis

Uniting for Larger Service

of life. Doctrine must issue in practical living on a higher plane in order to be of value. A Federated Church is organized not to propagate denominational doctrines but to administer spiritual necessities to the congregation regardless of doctrine.

Where two or more pastors representing different denominations serve the church, it has already been said that they must respect each other's convictions. If they set an example of tolerance and Christian love, the people will follow with a similar spirit. The sooner pastors and people alike agree to disagree in some respects and yet to hold fellowship, worship and commune with one another on the basis of their common faith in the major issues of our religion, the better for the cause of union. It must never be forgotten that the peace and unity of the church is more important than any doctrine in a federated situation.

Care in dealing with controversial issues hardly needs discussion. This is important in any church, let alone one in which religious backgrounds and present faiths differ. Controversies usually arise over minor details of the faith, and are therefore usually of minor import. Let the theologians dicker and bicker over such things. After they have argued the matter out there may be light which will help even a Federated Church, but it is not the province of a Federated Church to settle doctrinal disputes. Such a church has plenty to do if it teaches and preaches the certainties of the faith. By avoiding controversial issues and emphasizing the great truths of the Christian religion upon which we all agree fairly well, the Federated Church

Doctrine, Worship, Sacraments

can render its best service in ministering to the spiritual culture of a community.

We will turn now from doctrine to worship. Worship is the most important function of any church. It is the avenue and attitude of contact between the human and divine. Its attractiveness or unattractiveness frequently determines the success or failure of a church. Worship should be so planned and conducted that they who come to the service leave it with a sense of having been in the very presence of God. Whatever the forms or formulas of the service may be, the worship of a Federated Church or of any church falls flat unless it is pervaded by a deep spiritual tone.

The worship service should be as helpful as possible. It should meet the daily needs of the church people. The increase in attendance which commonly follows the consummation of a union of churches will not continue unless the services are magnetic, and they will not draw people unless they are helpful. Never depend upon union alone to fill the pews. The sheep come to be fed. If they are disappointed they may go where the grass looks greener or else take their religion by radio.

With these fundamental thoughts as a basis we will go on to the development of an order of divine service, thinking for the present particularly of the Sunday morning worship. It may be a tactful thing to develop an order of worship different from any used in the denominational churches before the federation. This avoids the suggestion of unfairness or domination.

In this new order of worship it is well to retain something dear to each group. For instance, if one of the

Uniting for Larger Service

churches had been using the words "forgive us our debts" in praying the Lord's Prayer, while the other has said from time immemoriam, "forgive us our trespasses" one or the other must change. A compromise on this matter was effected as follows in one of our successful Federated Churches. The Presbyterians had been accustomed to the words "forgive us our debts" and the Methodists to "forgive us our trespasses." The Presbyterians had the usage of having the prayer dedicating the offering after the offering was received while the Methodists had consecrated their gifts before the ushers waited upon the congregation. It was therefore agreed that the Lord's Prayer should be said in the Federated Church with the words "forgive us our debts" and the prayer of consecration should be offered before the worship of offerings. This compromise was satisfactory to everyone. It may occur to the reader that the matters here mentioned are very insignificant. That is true, yet sometimes the accumulation of dissatisfactions over insignificant things grows to major proportions in a Federated Church and this compromise was a very real thing to the church mentioned. It illustrates the way in which similar compromises may be arrived at in dealing with other issues.

A question may arise over the use of a Creed in the morning service where such has been the custom. In a certain Federated Church the original practice was to use the Apostles' Creed as a statement of belief in the opening part of the service. Since it is used both in Methodist and Presbyterian churches as a statement of faith, this seemed an excellent plan, since the uniting churches were of those denominations. It was noticed by the pastor,

Doctrine, Worship, Sacraments

however, that some members of the congregation never joined in repeating the Creed although they showed proper reverence during this part of the service. The pastor by inquiring into the reason for this lack of participation found that some of the people did not like or did not fully understand some of the parts and statements of the Creed. Hence, feeling that they could not subscribe to it they kept silence. They were tolerant of those who could repeat it in sincerity but were not satisfied with it themselves. Such honesty of action and thought showed that the use of a creed or declaration of faith was more than an empty form to these people. Some of those who would not join in the Apostles' Creed expressed the opinion that a statement of faith expressed a little differently would be a helpful thing. As a result of this investigation the pastor sought out a new statement of faith. Two such statements were found and used at various times and it was found that the participation in their use was practically one hundred per cent. It is better to have a declaration of faith couched in modern terms which gives general satisfaction than one which people fear because its statements and expressions savor of Medieval times.

The following are two statements of belief which have been used with satisfaction in a Federated Church:

"I believe in God, the Father, Creator and Ruler of all things, who in His love for mankind sent Jesus Christ into the world to live and die for truth and righteousness. I believe in the ideals of Jesus' life as pattern for the moulding of human character and as a guide in spiritual development.

"I believe that His Spirit still lives in the world to help

Uniting for Larger Service

us achieve the best that is in us, and that through prayer, worship and the study of the Holy Scriptures, we receive power, refreshment and counsel from Him.

"I believe in the church as an organization for the promotion of Christian fellowship, for the union of believers, and for the increase of the Kingdom of God.

"I believe in the pardon of sin and the immortality of the soul. Amen."

The pastor of the church where this creed was used wrote as follows concerning its results : "This creed was used in our morning worship with the significant result that several worshipers expressed their high appreciation of the change. No one seemed to object to its substitution for the Apostles' Creed. Not only was it more satisfactory to some of the congregation, but it made all of us think more carefully of the content of the Christian faith."

The second creed or Declaration of Faith quoted has been regularly used in the El Dorado County Federated Church for more than three years.

"Minister :—

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is the one true church, Apostolic and Universal, whose Holy Faith let us reverently and sincerely declare.

Minister and People :—

"We believe in God the Father, infinite in wisdom, power and love, whose mercy is over all His works and whose will is ever directed toward His children's good.

"We believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Man, the gift of the Father's unfailing grace, the ground

Doctrine, Worship, Sacraments

of our hope and the promise of our deliverance from sin and death.

"We believe in the Holy Spirit as the divine presence in our lives, whereby we are kept in perpetual remembrance of the truth of Christ and find strength to help in time of need.

"We believe that this faith should manifest itself in the service of love as set forth in the example of our blessed Lord, to the end that the Kingdom of God may come on earth. Amen."

To further illustrate the suggestions given above concerning the worship service in general, we will here include the order of service now being used in the El Dorado County Federated Church. This order is satisfactory to the people of that church and is different from that used in either of the churches before they federated.

Organ Prelude

Call to Worship (Appropriate verses of Scripture)

Hymn

Declaration of Faith

Pastoral Prayer (With response by Choir)

Anthem

Responsive Reading

Gloria Patri

Scripture Lesson

Announcements

Worship of Offerings (Organ voluntary)

Prayer of Consecration

Receiving of gifts

Uniting for Larger Service

- Anthem or other musical selection
- Sermon
- Hymn
- Benediction
- Doxology
- Organ Postlude

During the singing of the Doxology, the pastor in charge of the service goes to the back of the auditorium where he extends a friendly greeting as the worshipers leave the building.

This order of worship is intended merely as a suggestion. There should be no stereotyped form required in any Federated Church. Each church should determine its own forms to fit the needs and desires of the congregation it serves. It is not the avenue by which we meet the Infinite, but the fact that we do meet Him that is important. Aids to the proper devotional result may be found by giving due attention to the appropriateness of the auditorium, its devotional atmosphere, attractiveness of decorations and parts of the service, beauty in music, flowers, and other appointments of the auditorium. The fundamentals of worship are the same the world over and pastors of Federated Churches should make a thorough study of that subject so that they may be effective leaders in this part of their church's life.

The evening service is less formal in most churches than the morning worship. In Federated Churches as in others it must be characterized by variety and interest if it draws at all in these days when the church must compete with hundreds of counter attractions which draw the

Doctrine, Worship, Sacraments

crowds on Sunday evening. Because of the necessary change in form to make possible a variety of program, no suggested order is given here. Each pastor may readily build his own program for the evening service as the occasion may demand. As a rule, a good song service under competent leadership is popular. People still enjoy singing the old hymns of the church. The prayers should be made appropriate to the evening hours. A period of silent prayer has been used by the author with good response. It is not always necessary to have a formal sermon. Some congregations enjoy the answering of questions by the pastor. A missionary or religious drama by the young people may be included and will usually fill the church. A tableau or brief dialogue illustrating the Scripture lesson will help to drive it home. A symposium of talks on some subject related to religion by a group of laymen or young people may add further variety. Whatever may be done or desired in the evening service, the Federated Church should remember that it is fully as important as the morning devotions of the church. It should therefore receive as much emphasis in the planning of the church program.

In the larger parish federation, there will be still another type of service,—that at the smaller preaching point. If these centers are fortunate enough to have church buildings, with proper equipment, a formal type of service may be possible and appropriate. Again, the service may have to be held in a rural schoolhouse, private home, or community hall. Then an informal type of worship program will have the greatest appeal. In general, the people of the rural sections do not care greatly for ritualis-

Uniting for Larger Service

tic services. They are seeking a message of practical help in living. Elaborate mechanics of worship mean little to them and usually fail when tried in such situations. What they desire is, as one old farmer put it, "A chance to sing some hymns, a chance to pray, a chance to hear the Bible read, and a good sermon." He put the emphasis on the last three words. Though our desires may not agree with his, this statement does picture rather clearly the psychology of the rural mind regarding religion and worship. Adaptability is the most valuable asset of a Federated Church, especially for one in a large rural parish, for it will find widely varying situations in which it must do its work and widely varying people to work with.

The Sacraments call to mind another part of the church activity which should be carefully considered by a Federated Church. It must be remembered constantly that such a church deals with divergent situations and varied faiths as alluded to above. The different faiths represented in the ordinary Federated Church hold differing views of the symbols and means of grace. For instance, the administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper vary in the evangelical churches. Therefore, in a federated church all three modes of baptism: sprinkling, immersion and effusion should be recognized and administered without controversy or hesitation according to the desire of those receiving the rite. Tolerance and reverence should always mark the attitude of the people whatever mode is used. In order to further the end of reverence and a solemn attitude on the part of the congregation, the ritual should be as impressive and beautiful as possible. It is well also for the pastor to make a special study of how

Doctrine, Worship, Sacraments

he may gracefully administer any mode of baptism which he is not accustomed to use so that any unfortunate accident which might mar the service is avoided. Here again if it is thought wise, the Federated Church may construct its own ritual for the administration of this Sacrament. It is difficult, however, to improve upon the rituals for baptism given in the directories for worship of the various denominations.

Where the form of administering the Lord's Supper varies in the uniting churches there are three possible ways of solving the problem of which manner of celebration shall be used. The first is for all to agree upon a particular form. This, however, will seldom be satisfactory to all. People who from childhood have come to the altar to kneel and receive the elements cannot as a rule change to the Presbyterian form of administration with thorough satisfaction. Neither can people who have grown to love the Presbyterian method become quickly accustomed to the Episcopal method. Centering on a mode formerly used by one of the churches not only has the danger of not satisfying some people but also of suggesting favoritism. Nevertheless, if a large enough majority are in favor of the choice this may be the proper solution.

The second possibility is the rotation or alternation of the rituals. If the uniting churches are Presbyterian and Methodist, let the Methodist ritual be used at the first communion season, and the Presbyterian ritual at the next. This gives a sense of fairness, but the experience of some Federated Churches has been that this arrangement does not give complete satisfaction. Each time the Communion season is observed under this plan a part of the

Uniting for Larger Service

congregation has felt awkward in partaking of the Sacrament. However, this may prove a satisfactory disposal of the problem in some churches.

A third possibility is that of combining the elements of both rituals in one service. This may be done by the development of a new form of administration with a ritual suitable thereto. In this ritual it may be so arranged that elders distribute the elements to those who prefer to remain in their seats, at the same time that the others are receiving the symbols at the altar. This type of service has been used in the El Dorado County Federated Church with the following ritual which the two pastors developed to meet the needs of the local situation.

COMMUNION SERVICE

Invitation to Communion

Minister :

Dearly beloved, as we come near to celebrate the Holy Communion of the body and blood of Christ, we are to remember gratefully that our Lord instituted this Sacrament to be observed in His church to the end of the world; for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of Himself in His death; the sealing of all benefits thereof unto true believers: their spiritual nourishment and growth in Him; their further engagement in and to all duties they owe unto Him; and to be a pledge of their union with Him and with each other as members of His mystical Body.

Let us consider our great need of having our comfort and strength renewed in this our earthly pilgrimage and warfare: and especially how necessary it is that we come to Him with knowledge, faith, repentance, love, and with

Doctrine, Worship, Sacraments

hearts hungering and thirsting after Christ. Not unto those who live willingly in offenses, holding in their hearts malice, hatred or impurity; or unto those who maintain selfish pride and trust secretly in their own works, are these benefits of the Savior offered. But all those who are sincerely sorry for their sins and would be relieved of the burden of them, all who in humility trust in Christ, and seek his grace that they may lead a better life are invited in His name to come to the Lord's table. And now, coming to this sacred feast let us make confession of our sins to God.

General Confession

Minister and Congregation :

O Thou God of Mercy, who hast promised us forgiveness of sins as we turn to thee with repentant hearts we seek thy loving-kindness. We recognize that our thoughts and words and deeds have at times been evil. We are not worthy to be called Thy Children. But as we turn away from these sinful things we pray that Thou wilt lead us in the way everlasting. Cleanse our hearts from stain. Renew a right spirit within us. Inspire us to a fuller performance of our duties and teach us to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with Thee, our God. Through the name of Christ we ask it. Amen.

Minister :

O Lord, cleanse the souls of Thy people from their transgressions. Through Thy great goodness may we be removed from slavery to those sins which so easily beset us. Grant our request, O Father, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

Uniting for Larger Service

Minister :

And when the hour had come, He sat down and the Apostles with Him, and He said unto them: With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I shall not eat it until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.

Congregation sings :

"Break Thou the Bread of Life, dear Lord to me,
As Thou didst break the loaves beside the sea.
Beyond the sacred page, I seek Thee, Lord,
My spirit pants for Thee, O Living Word."

Minister :

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do the things I command you.

Congregation sings :

"Bless Thou the truth, dear Lord, to me, to me,
As Thou didst bless the bread by Galilee.
Then shall all bondage cease, all fetters fall,
And I shall find my peace, my All in All."

Minister and Congregation :

O Thou, to whom all hearts are visible, who knowest every human desire and failing, purify the meditations of our hearts by the inbreathing of Thy Holy Spirit that we may sincerely love Thee and worthily magnify Thy Holy Name through the Spirit of Christ. Amen.

Minister :

O God, may this hour of fellowship around Thy table be profitable to us who wait in Thy presence. May we be

Doctrine, Worship, Sacraments

cleansed in body and soul. May we be strengthened for truer service and for the establishment of Thy Holy Church. Amen.

Minister and Congregation:

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world,
have mercy upon us. Amen.

Congregation sings:

“My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Savior Divine!
Now hear me while I pray,
Take all my guilt away,
O let me from this day,
Be Wholly Thine.”

Minister:

Ye that do earnestly repent of your sins and are at peace with your neighbors, and intend to lead a more perfect life, following the commands of God, and walking henceforth in His holy ways; draw near with reverence, faith and thanksgiving, and partake of the Supper of the Lord that you may find comfort therein.

Congregation sings:

“May Thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart,
My zeal inspire;
As Thou hast died for me,
So may my love to Thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be,
A living fire.”

Uniting for Larger Service

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

Minister and Congregation:

It is our sacred duty, O God, that we should give thanks unto Thee for all of Thy benefits. We thank Thee for Jesus Christ, for the love expressed in his sacrifice for us, and now as we remember again His redeeming work may we worthily laud and magnify Thy Holy Name. Set apart these elements we pray Thee to their intended use and help us to partake worthily of this sacred feast. Unto Thee we render all the Glory of heaven and earth. Amen.

Minister: (Taking and breaking a piece of the bread)

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the same night in which he was betrayed, having taken bread, and blessed and broken it, gave it to His disciples, as I, ministering in His name, give this bread unto you, saying, Take, eat; this is My Body, which is broken for you: This do in remembrance of Me.

Minister: (Taking a cup in his hand)

After the same manner our Savior also took the cup: and having given thanks as hath been done in His name, He gave it to His disciples, saying, This cup is the New Covenant in My blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins: Drink, every one of you, of it.

(The elements are here delivered to the elders appointed to wait upon the congregation. Having received them, they step to the sides of the foyer. Then the invitation is given to those wishing to receive the communion at the altar to come forward. After the aisles are again clear, the elders distribute the elements to those in the pews,

Doctrine, Worship, Sacraments

while the minister serves those at the altar, as is the custom in Methodist churches. When all have been served, the elders assemble in the rear of the auditorium and when all of those who come to the altar have returned to their seats, they return the trays to the minister who replaces them upon the communion table. In doing this the elders should march down the aisle in orderly manner. When they are seated, the minister serves them. The minister should be served by the elders before anyone else partakes.)

(While the elders partake the congregation sings one or two stanzas of "Just as I am" and if desired the organist may play softly throughout the serving of the congregation.)

Prayer of Intercession:

Minister and Congregation:

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance: pour out Thy Spirit upon us as floods upon the dry ground that we may be refreshed for Thy service. May Thy ministers be clothed with righteousness and Thy people be filled with joy. Keep us all faithful unto Thee and gather the lost sheep into Thy fold of grace, we ask in the name of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

A Hymn of Praise

Benediction.

One thing which appealed to the people of the church where this service is used was the opportunity for the congregation to take part in the reading of the ritual. Care must be taken to avoid confusion in the delivery of the elements to the elders while people are coming to the

Uniting for Larger Service

altar. The most graceful procedure is to deliver the elements to the elders first and have them stand aside while those who wish come forward. When the aisles have become clear then the elders may proceed to wait upon the congregation. While the elders distribute the elements, the pastor serves those who have come to the altar. The pastor partakes first of the elements, then the people. When the elders have returned to the table, delivered their elements to the minister and been seated, the minister then serves them. The organist usually plays appropriate selections during the distribution of the bread and cup. It is effective also for the pastor to say from memory a few appropriate verses of scripture while he serves those at the altar and while the elders partake.

These suggestions are intended to illustrate the way in which a Federated Church should always respect the feelings of every member of the congregation. It should always seek to bring help to the greatest number, and should shape its program not to accord with some denominational formula but to give spiritual help to any who seek it.

XIII

DOES FEDERATION STAND THE TEST?

TWO friends were conversing one day about the work of a Federated Church. One was a member of that church and was giving an enthusiastic account of how much more the two churches had been able to accomplish since federating than under the former competitive scheme. The other listened respectfully and after the glowing word picture had been painted he commented:

“Sounds fine but it will not last.”

“And why not?” queried the first speaker.

“It just stands to reason that it will not,” was the rejoinder. “We have had separate denominations for hundreds of years and we are getting new ones all the time. People just refuse to stay together. You’ll be having a split in that church first thing you know.”

This ultimatum was not based upon knowledge of the church in question. The pessimist could not quote any valid reason for his conclusion other than past experience. He had not seen Presbyterians and Methodists enthusiastically working together in the church referred to and being bound closer and closer together by ties of Christian love. He knew nothing about federation except what he had heard from his friends. Yet he was positive in his opinion that it was impossible. He is characteristic of many of the objectors to federation or union of churches.

Uniting for Larger Service

Most of the adverse comments on church union or federation which have come to the attention of the author have come from those who know least about it.

Let us cease therefore, to be as dogmatic adults, "set in our ideas and knowledge," and become as little children, ready to learn and with hearts open to the facts. Let us ask and answer this question. Have we examples of Federated Churches which have been successful for any length of time? The answer is, yes. In support of the answer let us point out a few of the many successful churches now working on a federated program.

At Fair Oaks, California, a very successful Federated Church has been operating for approximately fifteen years. It is a union between Presbyterians and Methodists with a large affiliated membership in which several other religious faiths are represented. The people have called, alternately, Methodist and Presbyterian ministers to serve them as pastors. They have united the religious forces of the community into one strong Protestant church, whereas before, each church led a struggling existence. There is now a strong well organized Sunday School instead of two inefficient ones. There is an enthusiastic Young Peoples' work composed of graded Christian Endeavor Societies and other organizations. The people of the church and community are highly satisfied with the effort and more people are consistently helped by the church than was ever possible by church competition.

At Elk Grove, California, is a similar federation which has been active as such for more than twelve years. Progress here has been as satisfactory as at Fair Oaks. Here again the people have played fair in all relationships,

Does Federation Stand the Test?

calling alternately, Methodist and Presbyterian ministers as pastors, these being the uniting denominations.

At Central Point, Oregon, a Federated Church has been in operation for more than thirteen years. It is a union between Presbyterians and Methodists and is described by those in a position to know as being "entirely satisfactory." The cooperation is good and the church work more efficient. Pastors' salaries have been more adequate.

At Anderson, California, is a federation composed of Baptists and Presbyterians. This has been successful for about ten years. Here, again, there is an alternation of pastors between these denominations and since the federation no missionary funds have been required for its operation.

At Reno, Nevada, the Presbyterian and Congregational churches have been federated for some time, and have carried on a successful united program. At Trinity Center in the Mission District in San Francisco is another union of Presbyterians and Congregationalists. For a time these churches were also federated with Grace Methodist Church in the same district, which union was unfortunately dissolved. The Federation at Hood River, Oregon, also between Congregationalists and Presbyterians has functioned successfully for more than fifteen years. The feeling here is so splendid that although the Congregational membership predominates, the church has regularly called Presbyterian ministers to serve them. The Presbyterian and Congregational federation at Freewater, Oregon, existed as such for fourteen years, and has since become a Congregational Community Church, so that the final net result has been a united community work. A

Uniting for Larger Service

friend who knows this situation well writes, "It has been and still is a great success."

The El Dorado County Federated Church has not been in operation as long as some of those already mentioned, having been organized in 1927, but it has been doing successfully a somewhat different type of work. It was organized, not only to cut down on overchurching in the city of Placerville, California, but to minister to a wider area. Placerville is the County Seat of El Dorado County and has a population of 2300, with a large agricultural and mining population surrounding the town within a few miles. In addition to its work in Placerville the church carries on a religious program in the communities of Camino, Georgetown, Coloma, Rescue, El Dorado, and Diamond Springs. These six communities vary in population from 150 to about 500. In order to carry on a schedule of regular religious activities in all seven of these communities, two pastors are required. One is called from each of the affiliating denominations, Methodist and Presbyterian. This church enrolls members in both of these denominational groups and in its affiliated membership are found: Baptists, Congregationalists, Christians (Disciples), and Evangelical Lutherans, showing that it appeals to a wide variety of faiths. Before the union the denominational churches in Placerville had been struggling for some time. Since the federation the financial situation has been much improved and both pastors have been paid an adequate salary. There has been a steady growth in membership of the churches which to the time of this writing approximates thirty per cent. The Sunday School has enlarged and is more efficient. The Young People's

Does Federation Stand the Test?

and children's organizations are more enthusiastic and there is an optimistic attitude which has replaced the discouraged feeling which prevailed before the union.

The six smaller communities now served regularly by the church are unable to support a work of their own and are well satisfied with the work of the Federated Church. There is not one which is not receiving far more attention from a religious standpoint than it received before the larger parish was organized. The fact that this church has existed harmoniously for more than six and a half years on a two pastor basis demonstrates that two ministers of different faiths can work together cooperatively in a single united effort. This union is growing more stable as its work goes on and is generally recognized by all who know of it as being a vast improvement over the work which was done by the churches prior to 1927.

It must be said in fairness that there are many other Federated Churches whose records show success and which would be just as worthy illustrations of the practicability of this type of community church. Enough examples have been pointed out, however, to show that such churches do stand the test of successful operation.

I think, now, that I can hear someone asking: Is one large Federated Church more efficient than two separate churches would be? Does not competition stimulate each church to do its best? In answer to these questions there flashes into mind the pictures of three communities where competition has had the opposite effect. Each church robbing the other: All proselyting: None able to pay an efficient pastor, on they go in their selfishness, their petty bickerings and strifes disgusting their communities.

Uniting for Larger Service

But why spend time discussing negative situations? The positive examples of efficiency under federated situations are more important. In one Federated Church there has been an increase of thirty per cent in membership and in the Sunday School in three years. Pastors' salaries are no longer in arrears. The benevolent giving of the church has increased one hundred per cent, and the number of weekly contacts fifty per cent. In another community where two churches existed, neither able to support a minister, by federation, a strong church was formed which was able to pay a pastor adequately. The combined Sunday School showed a steady increase in membership. It was more enthusiastic and more efficient. Through proper organization and program every teacher became a trained teacher through standard training courses. No further trouble was experienced in financing the church and benevolence giving has doubled. Church membership, formerly almost static, has since the federation shown a consistent increase. The two church buildings which were inadequate have been replaced by a modern and churchly brick structure with an adequate plant for religious education. As a Federated Church these two bodies which formerly were parasites upon each other, are now presenting a strong united front against the forces of evil in the community.

These two churches report the following accomplishments as a result of the federated program: (1) They have been able to cover a larger field with less overlapping or wastage of effort. (2) They have been able to provide for more efficient Sunday School and Young Peoples' work. (3) They have had a more stable and better paid

Does Federation Stand the Test?

ministerial leadership. (4) Denominational ends have been made subordinate to Kingdom ends, resulting in a truer evangelism and increase in church membership. (5) Interest in missions and other benevolent objects has been improved. (6) Cooperation by the community at large with the work of the church has been definitely increased.

The third test that federation has stood is the test of economy in the use of missionary funds. The administration of the money given to our missionary boards is a stewardship of the highest order. This money is given prayerfully that the Gospel may be carried to the needy and remote places where without it religious work could not exist. Many times it is given sacrificially by people who can scarcely afford the gift but who give it cheerfully for the love of the great cause of Christianity. Among these funds are many "widow's mites" as well as lavish gifts of the wealthy. It represents the outpouring of life and vital energy as many a giver has toiled to earn his sustenance. What trust is more sacred than that of administering the expenditure of such gifts? Is it keeping faith with that trust when missionary boards expend these precious gifts to sustain churches which are struggling against each other for supremacy? It is a travesty that in the past the moneys of this trust fund have been too frequently poured into fields of competition to hold a church for the denomination, instead of into fields where there is absolutely no religious work. The neediest fields have repeatedly been neglected in order to pamper competing churches which should unite their forces and thus relieve the mission boards of responsibility.

The federating of rural churches almost invariably

Uniting for Larger Service

effects a saving in missionary money. In at least five of the churches used as illustrations in this book no missionary aid has been required since the federation took place, whereas before that event either one or both of the affiliating churches had to be helped by a Home Missions Board. Those Federated Churches which still receive missionary aid are requiring much less help than if they were not united.

In the case of the El Dorado County Federated Church, aid to the fields was not materially reduced, but this fact was justified by the increase in territory covered by the church in reaching six communities outside the center in which the federating churches are located. In this larger parish the missionary boards of each denomination involved expend \$300 annually. This makes a total of \$600 of outside help. The work in Placerville is self-sustaining and contributes annually the equivalent of \$1200 for work in the other six communities of the parish. This means that at a cost of \$100 per community per year of missionary funds from without, these six hamlets of El Dorado County, which without the federated work would be without a consistent religious program, have a permanent and regular schedule of church activities. If it were not for the united work, the missionary boards would have to add to their contribution the amount given by the Placerville work if they were to sustain a similar program in the smaller communities. In others words \$1800 instead of \$600 of Home Missions funds would have to be expended. Without the added responsibility of the larger parish this Federated Church would need no assistance.

Does Federation Stand the Test?

The National Home Missions Council has been doing excellent work recently in stopping the wastage of Home Missions money. Through a series of surveys and conferences they have secured the cooperation of a number of the denominations who have agreed not to give missionary aid to competitive fields. Perhaps this will encourage the establishment of more Federated Churches which will effect savings similar to those mentioned.

There is a more universal contribution which Federated Churches are making. This contribution is in the field of denominational union. These are days when entire denominations are uniting and discussing union. These moves toward the union of the forces of Christ are to be highly commended, and they will be materially encouraged by the increase and success of Federated Churches. Federation is a form of church union on a small scale. If one works it is probable that the other can be made practical also. If Methodists and Presbyterians, for instance, can work together in harmony in a single community, then those two denominations can bring about such a situation in which they can work together in harmony on a national scale. If Christian love rules, if selfish ambitions are put away, if denominational barriers are broken down, and the claims of our common Lord and Master given first place, the union of denominations will some day succeed. Meanwhile, if we cannot have denominational union on a large scale, we can have it on a community scale. Every Federated Church is a harbinger of the great day when the churches of Christ shall be one even as He and the Father are one.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE following books may be helpful to readers who are interested in the problem of uniting the religious forces of over-churched communities.

- Ainslie, Peter: "If Not a United Church, What?" Revell.
- Brunner, Edmund deS.: "The Larger Parish." Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1934.
- Cowden, John B.: "Worshiping Toward Christian Unity," 1930.
- Dana, Malcolm: "The Larger Parish," Town and Country Department of the Congregational Church Extension Boards.
- Hargreaves, J. R. and Others: "Community Religion and the Denominational Heritage." Harpers, 1930.
- Hooker, Elizabeth R.: "United Churches," Doran, 1926.
- Hooker, Elizabeth R.: "How Can Local Churches Come Together?" Home Missions Council, 1928.
- Inquiry, The: "Are There Too Many Churches In Our Town?" Published by The Inquiry, for sale by Association Press, 1928.
- Morse, Herman N. (Editor): "Home Missions Today and Tomorrow." Joint Committee on Five-Year Program of Survey and Adjustment. Home Missions Council, 1934.
- Piper, David R.: "Community Churches," Willett, Clark and Colby, 1928.
- Piper, David R.: "Saving Rural Religion," The Tabloid Press. 1928.
- Shaver; Erwin L.: "Christianizing Our Community," University of Chicago. 1929.
- Zahniser, Charles Reed: "Interchurch Community Programs," Nelson, 1932.
- Zumbrunen, A. C.: "The Community Church," University of Chicago. 1922.

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY



128 836

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY